NEA Today

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Introducing the NEA Credit Card with Travel Rewards
See back page

Welcome Aboard!

How Veteran NEA Members Are Helping New Colleagues Succeed

Jennifer Curtis and her mentor Lori Goodine

NEA Today

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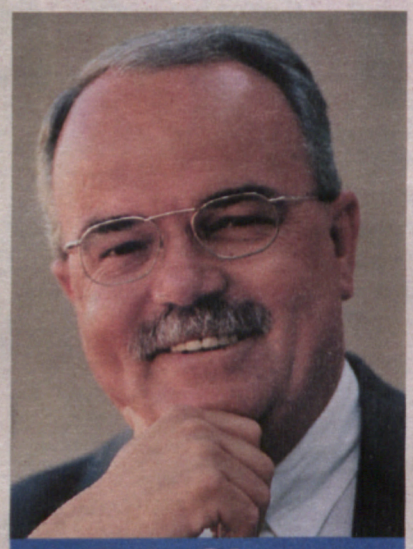
Helping New Teachers Survive the First Year

President's Viewpoint

It's savvy, sage, and necessary for NEA to reach out to newcomers and help them aboard.



Bob Chase

Since first-year teachers typically get little support from administrators, shouldn't they get a big helping hand from their NEA local affiliate?

Ask Jennifer Riedel. When she walked into her Ohio classroom to teach for the first time, she thought it would be like a Hollywood movie.

"I really expected it was going to be like *Lean on Me* or *The Dead Poets' Society*, where the students would be overwhelmed by my desire for them to learn," she recalls. "It was exactly the opposite. I was scared out of my mind to come in to school every day."

Each fall, thousands of new teachers enter America's classrooms with dreams of inspiring their students. Yet, like Jennifer, many quickly feel overwhelmed.

"There's a tradition that when you start off as a teacher, you get the hardest kids to teach and the worst classes," observes Ohio high school English teacher Sharon Draper, 1997's National Teacher of the Year. "New teachers get schedules that a 25-year teacher couldn't handle."

As a union, we need to be more supportive of newcomers—for the sake of our profession and our students.

All of us who have ever been in the classroom know how daunting the first year can be. Today's new teachers face additional, unprecedented challenges.

There are now students with babies, guns, and disabilities, students without discipline or hope, classrooms in disrepair, politicians and communities that are antagonistic toward public education, more diverse and demanding student populations—and expectations that teachers act as substitute social workers and parents.

All of this can be extremely demoralizing. Not surprisingly, the highest attrition rate among teachers occurs in their very first year of teaching. We can't afford to lose such fresh talent.

Historic resolutions passed at NEA's 1997 Representative Assembly this summer take a strong first step toward changing this pattern.

By wide margins, the more than 9,000 elected delegates approved a number of measures that embrace "New Unionism" and may offer better assistance to new teachers.

While NEA and its affiliates will continue to fight for bread-and-butter workplace issues, New Unionism recognizes that for our members to truly thrive, public education as a whole must thrive.

This means securing better teacher training, higher academic standards, and more equitable resources for schools. It also means enabling teachers to take control of professional standards.

The boldest resolution passed at the RA gives NEA's local affiliates the green light to develop peer assistance and review programs that pair mentor teachers with new teachers and veterans experiencing major difficulties in the classroom. Until very recently, we considered such programs management's domain.

But, with peer assistance and review programs in place, we can work to ensure quality teaching. And by helping teachers in trouble, we can ultimately reduce the need for dismissals.

Peer assistance and review programs are crucial if we are going to retain promising new teachers. In Columbus, Ohio, where a peer assistance and review program is already in place, a stunning 85 percent of new teachers now remain in the profession.

Other newly revised NEA resolutions encourage mentoring, reinforce our commitment to affirmative action, and approve using standardized tests diagnostically. These measures are particularly important for new teachers.

"New Unionism embraces so much of what today's student-teachers are concerned with," says Roel Gonzales-Padilla, president of the NEA Student Program.

"Cheap liability insurance simply isn't enough," he adds. "Student teachers today want to know: How do we develop professionally?"

The new resolutions may prove a godsend for beginning teachers. After all, it was because of a peer assistance and review program that Jennifer Riedel survived her first year.

Jennifer was assigned a mentor who helped her turn her classroom around. Without that help, Jennifer says, she would have sunk.

With an estimated two million new teachers needed by the year 2007, it's savvy, sage, and necessary for NEA to reach out to newcomers and help them aboard.

Ultimately, promoting professional excellence is vital not only for our members, but for our students and our future.

Bob Chase can be reached via E-mail at BobChase@nea.org.

NEA at a Glance

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Did You Know...
That NEA's annual Representative Assembly is the world's largest democratic, deliberative body. This past July, more than 9,300 delegates—all elected by colleagues back home—gathered in Atlanta to determine NEA policy, elect officers, and pass the NEA's $200 million budget and strategic plan. For more information, see page 7 or go to NEA's Web page at www.nea.org.

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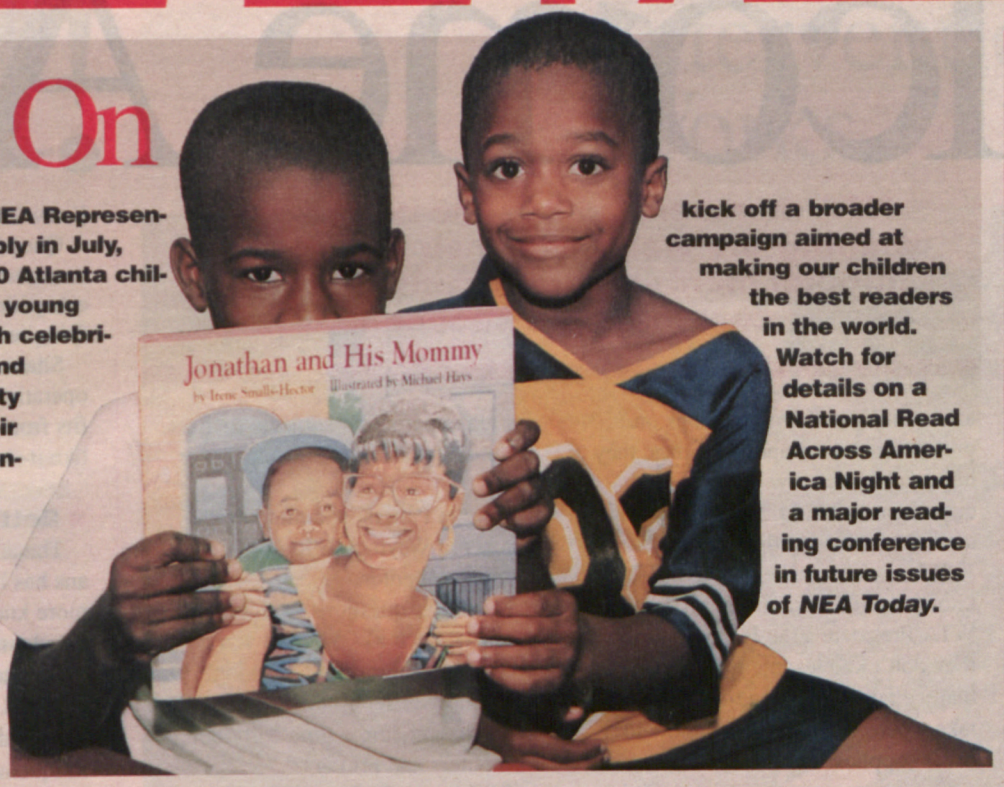
NEA Today this Month

Read On

At this year's NEA Representative Assembly in July, more than 700 Atlanta children like these two young boys teamed up with celebrities, NEA leaders, and prominent community activists to read their favorite stories. Sponsored by the NEA Emergency Commission on Urban Children, this "Read-In" will kick off a broader campaign aimed at making our children the best readers in the world. Watch for details on a National Read Across America Night and a major reading conference in future issues of *NEA Today*.



Joe Di Dio

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Cover photo by Jim Harrison

Michael Quan

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Welcome Abo

NEA members across the nation are 'sharing the wealth' of their experience through mentoring programs that help new teachers succeed.

On her first day as a classroom teacher, with a slight case of stage fright, Jennifer Curtis stood front and center before 18 kindergartners.

"There was a bit of nervous panic," says the 24-year-old. "I thought, 'Wow, this is it! They're looking at me to teach them everything they need to know!' I realized then and there that this job is just as important as a doctor's. You can't afford to make a mistake."

That's a heavy load—but one Curtis didn't have to carry alone. Her local NEA affiliate, the Weymouth Teachers Association in Massachusetts, runs a mentoring program that matched her with veteran teachers. Lori Goodine was a mentor to Curtis at the Ralph Talbot School.

"I didn't know about pacing, how long to stay on a topic, and which activities were developmentally appropriate," Curtis explains. "Lori and I would sit with our lesson plans to see if I was on the right track. She shared tons of curriculum materials with me."

As a result, Curtis had a successful year in the classroom. That's good for students, Curtis—and the profession.

In the next 10 years, NEA Research estimates that hundreds of thousands of teachers will retire. Add to that dramatic increases in the student population, and experts say schools across the country may need to hire as many as two million new teachers by the year 2007.

It's one thing to hire that many teachers—and another to keep them. Right now, between one-third and one-half of all new teachers leave the profession within their first five years.

That's one reason Weymouth NEA members created their "Share the Wealth" mentoring program two years ago. By providing one-on-one mentoring and monthly workshops on professional development topics, they hope to support new teachers, end classroom isolation, and improve the quality of teaching districtwide.

"Many new teachers have little knowledge of the curriculum," says WTA President Ellie Hanlon, "and they don't know some of the basics that we take for granted—like how to take a personal day or even how to order supplies."

One-on-one mentors who work in the same building with their novice partner carry most of the mentoring load. But they get help from "theme mentors," who help teachers grasp particular subjects such as technology, assessment, science, or math.

Loretta Patterson, a ninth grade teacher at Weymouth Junior High, is a computer mentor.

"I answer questions from other teachers, such as 'What do you do when computers aren't working?' Or, 'How do you set up the room to allow each student ample time with the computers and printers?' "

The mentoring and sharing continue during monthly workshops, held at a local steakhouse after school.

Over soft drinks and Buffalo wings, Weymouth teachers exchange ideas and information on resolving conflict in the classroom, working effectively with parents, or planning school field trips. One well-attended session was devoted to swapping lesson plans.

The most popular workshop by far: "Everything You Always Wanted to Know But Were Afraid To Ask."

Questions flew fast and furious as new teachers got the inside scoop on everything from getting subs to satisfying requirements for recertification.

Share the Wealth has only been operating for two years, but the benefits from the program—and efforts like it—are clear.

Better teaching.

The advice and counsel from veterans has helped new teachers become more knowledgeable and confident in the classroom.

Novice Heather Murphy, a 23-year-old hired the year her school launched a new language arts curriculum and portfolio assessment system, can attest to that.

"I wasn't sure what was expected of me," Murphy says. "But my mentor, Kathy Woodward, helped me create lesson plans to meet the new curriculum requirements—and that saved me."

By participating in a Massachusetts mentoring program, teachers Lori Goodine (left) and Jennifer Curtis earn professional development credit toward recertification.

ard!

■ Care and feeding of the profession.

As a result of the mentoring program, teachers, administrators, and the public increasingly see the Association promoting high teaching standards and professionalism.

Says veteran and mentor Erma LaPierre: "It serves our purpose to make sure we help our new teachers be the very best. We're showing the public that we have high standards for teaching."

■ A better image of the Association in the eyes of new members.

The mentoring program gives teachers with little prior union experience a chance to see the benefits of belonging to the Association.

Lisa Klein, a ninth grade teacher at Weymouth Junior High, had a negative perception of the union when she started work in the midst of a heated contract dispute.

"All I saw was fighting and bickering," Klein recalls. That perception has changed since Klein joined the mentoring program.

"Besides all of the help the mentoring program has given me in the classroom, it's also gotten me on the pro-union side," she says. "I see more clearly where my money is going and how much the Association can really support you when you need it."

That's music to WTA President Ellie Hanlon's ears.

"Hopefully, all of our new teachers will become actively involved in the Association, once they see what we're trying to accomplish."

Jim Harrison

■ A chance for veteran teachers to leave their mark on the profession.

"Many of us are slated to retire within the next 10 years," Hanlon says. "Without a program like this, the things we've all learned and done will just leave with us."

—Karen Gutloff

The nation will need **2 million** new teachers over the next 10 years. But up to **50 percent** of new teachers leave the profession in the first five years.

Source: The Handbook of Research on Teacher Education, 2nd edition

Early Intervention Works

Todd Spencer

Virginia teacher Donna Benton says Education Association of Norfolk workshops on how to work with children "gave me confidence and helped me develop as a professional."

For many NEA local affiliates, the time to reach out to new teachers is *before* they walk through the school door.

In Virginia: Members of the Education Association of Norfolk work with Norfolk State University staff to provide seminars and other professional development activities to college education students.

Donna Benton, a pre-kindergarten teacher at Jacox Elementary School in Norfolk, relied heavily on her nearby NEA local affiliate during her college years.

"The student teaching program at Norfolk State is excellent, but it still didn't supply me with everything I needed to go into the classroom for the first year," says Benton. To help avoid first-day jitters, she entered her first classroom armed with a list of survival tips she got from the Association.

Benton got the help she needed—and now returns the favor as a building rep for her local NEA affiliate.

"We are nurturing and growing professional teachers *and* leaders in the Association," says Association President Shirley George.

To encourage teens to go into teaching, EAN members also invite high school members of the Future Educators of America to a series of workshops on teaching.

"We discuss college education programs, and give them an overview of the teaching profession, including salaries and working conditions," says UniServ Director Malcolm Staples.

In Nevada: Because of a huge influx of new students, some 1,500 new teachers were hired in the Las Vegas area last year alone.

Each one of these new teachers received an orientation from the Clark County Classroom Teachers Association weeks before the school year began.

CCCTA's "New-Hire Orientation" takes place over two days and gives newcomers all the details on union benefits, including health insurance, loan programs, and retirement plans. Local banks and vendors are also on hand to offer information and advice on credit union loans, housing options, and car financing.

Veteran teachers are there to answer questions and help new educators fill out forms.

"It's teachers helping teachers," explains CCCTA President Sue Strand. "And it's a way to show new colleagues the benefits of belonging to our Association."

CCCTA also gives new teachers a copy of the curriculum they're expected to follow.

"It was fabulous to have someone tell me, 'This is what you need to teach,'" says Ana Lucas, a third grade teacher at Quannah McCall Elementary School. "At my old school, I didn't receive the curriculum until well into the school year."

For new hires relocating from other states, CCCTA provides information on housing and utility services. Association members will even meet new teachers at the airport.

"We want their personal life to be in order," says Association rep Stephanie Bodner, "so their professional life can thrive."

—Karen Gutloff

Sharing Words of Wisdom

New educators share the best advice they've gotten from their mentors.

"Ease into the school year, and take it slow. Don't try to do too many things at once. You don't have to be super-teacher-of-the-year—at least not right away."
—Brian Stark, third grade teacher, Riverside Elementary School, Brainerd, Minnesota

"Let your students know what to expect from you, but be adaptable to each situation. For example, learn how to adapt your lesson plan so you can teach kids outside during nice weather. Try to anticipate what can happen and be one step ahead of the students."
—Helen Ann Campbell, career technology teacher, West High School, Anchorage, Alaska

"Have your lesson planned out thoroughly to build in time for disruptions—especially bathroom breaks. You don't want bathroom and water breaks to take away from instruction time."
—Vincent Darby, first grade teacher, St. Helena Elementary School, Norfolk, Virginia

"Set your expectations high, but don't be upset if you don't reach them—keep trying. Don't be afraid to make a mistake. Instead of harping on the things that don't go well in your lessons, look at the things you are doing right."
—Joe Carracappa, third grade teacher, Conshohocken Elementary School, Conshohocken, Pennsylvania

"You don't have to scream and yell to get your point across to children. Different approaches are needed depending on each student's personality."
—Cathy Fahie, middle school physical education teacher, Weymouth Junior High, Weymouth, Massachusetts

Steve Kohls

Minnesota teacher Brian Stark says having a mentor is a great way to share frustrations and get advice on problem solving.

Pop Quiz: Ready To Help?

Does your local Association help new teachers succeed?

When it comes to making sure new teachers have the support they need, is your local Association part of the solution?

Take a moment to answer these questions. Then go to talk with your building representatives and local officers about the answers.

1 Does your local Association conduct informational meetings with new teachers within one or two months of the new school year? ☐Yes ☐No

2 Is there an Association-sponsored induction ceremony in which new teachers receive pins, ribbons, or other recognition? ☐Yes ☐No

3 Has the Association ever sponsored a public event for school employees, students, and community members? ☐Yes ☐No

4 Is there a packet of information sent to new members specifically on school employment issues? ☐Yes ☐No

5 Does the Association have a mentoring program or "buddy system" for new teachers? ☐Yes ☐No

6 Will the Association offer to fund a young teacher's attendance at a regional or state workshop? ☐Yes ☐No

7 Are there local workshops held on professional issues specifically targeted toward new teachers' professional concerns? ☐Yes ☐No

8 Is training provided to local union leaders and staff on the importance of engaging and attracting new members? ☐Yes ☐No

9 Does the Association sponsor a new teacher dinner or luncheon where young educators can learn about the role of the union? ☐Yes ☐No

10 Are there primers or booklets containing do's and don'ts for new teachers? ☐Yes ☐No

Source: The above questions are adapted from a Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA) work group report on new teachers.

Resources

If you're a new teacher and don't have a mentor or adviser, don't despair. Help's available from the NEA Professional Library *Beginning Teacher's Survival Kit*. To order any of the titles below, call 800/229-4200.

The First-Year Teacher: Teaching with Confidence (K-8) includes tips on preparing for the first days of school, plus time-saving ideas—all in an easy-to-read format. Non-members $18.95, NEA members $14.95. Stock #1862-1-00-F.

Bright Ideas: *A Pocket Mentor For Beginning Teachers* offers suggestions on how to prepare personally and professionally for that first teaching job. Many checklists are included on working with parents and organizing the classroom. Non-members $5.95, NEA members $4.50. Stock #2153-3-00-F.

Pitfalls and Potholes: *A Checklist for Avoiding Common Mistakes of Beginning Teachers* contains user-friendly checklists to help you grasp the nuts and bolts of landing a job, managing student conduct, getting along with administrators, and maintaining personal priorities. Non-members $5.95, NEA members $4.50. Stock #2151-7-00-F.

Teaching and the Art of Successful Classroom Management: *A How-to Guidebook for Teachers in Secondary Schools* is a must for first-year secondary school teachers. The book shows you how to establish classroom rules, maintain record books, plan lessons, design meaningful tests, and more. Non-members $18.95, NEA members $14.95. Stock #2004-9-00-F.

Inspiring Discipline: *A Practical Guide for Today's Classroom* will help you take charge of your classroom whether you're a beginning teacher or a veteran. Non-members $12.95, NEA members $10.95. Stock #2950-X-00-F.

A shipping/handling charge will be added to all orders.

Online Help: For tips and a list of helpful NEA resources, go to http://helpfrom.nea.org.

helpfrom.nea.org
Tips and Tools for Better Schools

At the NEA Representative Assembly

'Our Responsibility for Quality'

Delegates welcome bold new steps to improve schools and instruction.

Some time ago," NEA President Bob Chase told delegates just before the Association's 1997 Representative Assembly opened in Atlanta, "I saw a bumper sticker that read, 'Change is good. You go first.'"

That line drew laughs—and set the tone for the next four days of discussion and debate. The question of change—specifically, the question of how NEA should change to best help educate America's kids—quickly became the RA's driving dynamic.

On the RA's first day, July 3, Chase put that question squarely in his convention keynote address.

"The quality of education," he told delegates, "is our responsibility."

Meeting that responsibility, Chase argued, means that NEA members can no longer afford to leave basic decisions about teaching and learning to school officials.

"If we are tired of time-wasting in-service training," he noted, "then we must design and offer our own professional development programs."

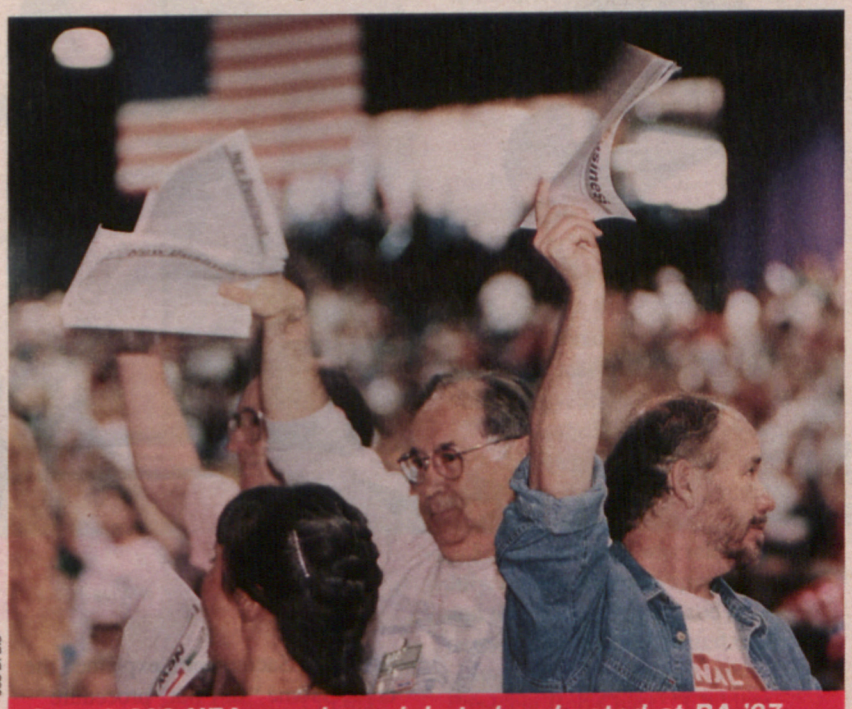
But how far should this responsibility go? Does taking responsibility for quality mean guiding failing teachers out of the profession?

That's exactly what's happening in school districts like Columbus, Ohio, where NEA affiliates have bargained peer assistance and review programs that have NEA members helping struggling colleagues to improve—and helping teachers who can't improve out of teaching.

Until this July's RA, NEA policy frowned on programs that had NEA members evaluating other members. Whether or not to change that policy became the '97 RA's central debate.

"We work to save our members' jobs and to protect them from unfair dismissal," argued delegate Dennis Testa from New Jersey. "I don't want members to fear coming to my Association for help."

"We are in a battle to save public education," answered Florida's Linda Bacon, who noted that peer assistance and review programs are needed to [illegible] teachers who are struggling. [illegible]eachers who cannot or will not improve," said Bacon, "should be helped to find another position."



Joe Di Dio

Over 9,200 NEA members debated and voted at RA '97.

In the end, delegates passed a resolution that gives the green light to NEA local affiliates that want to explore peer review options.

"NEA delegates made history today," President Chase noted after the vote. "Our members said clearly they want to take control of the profession."

All resolutions enacted at the RA appear after page 24. For more on the RA, check www.nea.org/ra.

What's an RA?

What's the RA?
The Representative Assembly is NEA's highest decision-making authority—and the world's largest democratic deliberative body.

How often does the RA meet?
Every year, for four days.

Who are the RA delegates?
NEA members elected by their colleagues back home.

A Landmark Spotlight on Support Staff

No school in America can function effectively without support staff—and, as the 1997 Representative Assembly made clear, neither can NEA.

Support staff—teacher assistants, custodians, bus drivers, secretaries, and all the other staffers who help public schools succeed—have been active NEA members in most states since the early 1980s.

Joe Di Dio

Aide Iona Holloway

But support staffers haven't been active at NEA's top leadership levels. Not, that is, until now. Delegates at the 1997 RA in Atlanta elected Iona Holloway, a Louisiana instructional aide, to the nine-person NEA Executive Committee.

Holloway, who becomes the first support staffer in NEA history on the Executive Committee, will serve alongside NEA's newly elected secretary-treasurer, Arizona's Dennis Van Roekel, and Dan Sakota from Idaho, who was elected to a second open Executive Committee slot.

More than 270,000 of NEA's 2.3 million members are currently working in support staff positions.

Heroes & Zeroes

NEA's 1997 Friend of Education Award goes to North Carolina Governor James Hunt for his relentless fight for quality education. As chair of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Hunt has been a leader in the fight for what he calls the four *R*s: "recruiting, retaining, rewarding, and respecting good teachers."

Sandy Schaeffer

Headed for labor's 10 Most Wanted List? Members of the North Little Rock, Arkansas school board and superintendent James Smith pulled the plug on 20 years of collective bargaining. In June, the board voted unanimously to decertify the North Little Rock Classroom Teachers Association and replace it with a personnel committee.

Roll out the Welcome Wagon for former U.S. Senator from Illinois and current NEA member Paul Simon. Now a professor of political science and journalism at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Simon sent in a personal check for Association dues, saying he was "a great believer in this type of activity."

New-age cheaters will never prosper using the "virtually free" papers posted on the Internet (www.cheater.com)—unless they know how to spell. Watch for students handing in papers on "genitics," "psycology," and "King Lare."

A Long-Live-Rome Award to NEA member Emily Rome, an 80-year-old physical education teacher in Paterson, New Jersey who's been teaching for 55 years. When asked why she's still working, Rome jokes: "I keep breathing and the kids just keep coming." Saluted recently on the *Rosie O'Donnell Show*, Rome was ever the eloquent spokesperson for public education.

On Capitol Hill

It's Budget Time Again

Congress is now acting on President Clinton's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 1998, which would increase education funding by 34 percent over last year and include $9 billion in new resources. *What you can do: Urge your members of Congress to support programs that directly impact the classroom and provide even more money for key K-12 programs like Title 1 basic skills and special ed.*

Needed: Money To Rebuild

NEA supports the agreement between President Clinton and Republican leaders to balance the federal budget over five years, but Congress needs to restore a missing piece: $5 billion requested by the President for school renovation. *What you can do: Urge lawmakers to support federal resources for school infrastructure needs.*

Kids Need Coverage

The balanced budget agreement includes $16 billion for health coverage for 5 million low- and moderate-income children without insurance. But an amendment to add another 5 million children was tabled. *What you can do: Urge lawmakers to back laws to provide health care for uninsured children.*

Yet More Voucher Vehicles

Private school voucher provisions are popping up like toadstools in House and Senate bills—as everything from a "voucher demonstration project" to payment for children to move from "unsafe" public schools to private and parochial schools. *What you can do: Urge lawmakers to oppose the use of public funds for vouchers or tuition tax credits for K-12 private schools.*

For the New Fall Season

Nine child advocacy groups—ranging from NEA to the National PTA—have reached an agreement with the television industry to modify the TV Parental Guideline System on October 1. The new system adds content labels to age-based ratings.

Finally: A Better IDEA

Jose L. Villegas

California special ed teacher and NEA member Ed Amundson called on his years of classroom experience to help build a better Individuals With Disabilities Education Act.

Congress has passed a law that can make classroom inclusion of the disabled work.

If you ever doubted that the average school employee has an impact in Congress, consider this IDEA—the newly "reauthorized" Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, signed by President Clinton in June.

Passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, the reauthorized—expanded and improved—IDEA addresses the safety and professional concerns of educators who work with the nation's 5.4 million disabled students, 75 percent of whom are in general education classrooms.

Working in coalition with everyone from advocates for the disabled to school administrators, NEA lobbyists helped educate members of Congress on the reality of inclusive education.

When Association lobbyist Diane Shust met with Congressional staffers, California special ed teacher Ed Amundson, chair of NEA's Caucus for Educators of Exceptional Children, was at her side.

Amundson, who teaches the learning disabled at C.K. McClatchy High School in Sacramento, explained the cumbersome "stay put" procedure school staff have had to follow to deal with special ed students with severe behavioral problems.

He also stressed the need to provide general and special ed teachers relief from "volatile, explosive, and stressful situations."

And he advised lawmakers that "40 to 60 percent of teachers in special education do not currently hold special ed credentials—just waivers."

Such inside information, gathered through open NEA Representative Assembly hearings, an NEA task force on inclusion, and Amundson's continuous contact with members, helped lawmakers shape a better law.

While not guaranteeing funding above the current $3.1 billion per year, the new IDEA does include improvements like:

- A provision allowing schools to remove a disruptive student from class for up to 45 days—up from the current 10 days—and permitting a district hearing officer (rather than a federal judge) to order alternative placements.
- A requirement that general education teachers be involved "where appropriate" in the development of students' Individual Education Plans.
- A greater emphasis on professional development—including pre-service, in-service, and "cross-over training"—for general and special ed teachers. Now states must use 75 percent of new improvement grants for professional development at the local level.
- Appropriate training and supervision for paraprofessionals in accordance with state law.
- A stronger emphasis on standards and assessments for disabled students.

"Education of disabled children is a civil right," says Amundson, "and this law can make it work for them."

But IDEA won't work for educators, he points out, unless NEA members learn what's in the reauthorized law and tell Association lobbyists what kind of implementing regulations are needed.

"It's critical for educators to realize that members of Congress do listen to them," Amundson concludes. "If you want proof, look at the new IDEA."

For More Information

For more on IDEA, point your Web browser to www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/IDEA. To contact the NEA Caucus for Educators of Exceptional Children, call Ed Amundson at 916/264-4388.

The Bottom Line

Out-of-field assignments: Over one-third of America's secondary-level math classes are taught by teachers who don't have either a major or minor in math. Out-of-field assignments in history are almost twice that common.

Elementary excellence: The latest international math and science comparison says American fourth graders are outperforming their peers in every industrial nation in the world except South Korea. For more results, check www.ed.gov/NCES/timss.

Grades matter: One of America's most prestigious corporations, IBM, hopes it's starting a new pro-education trend. The computer maker has begun asking all applicants for manufacturing jobs to show their complete high school transcripts.

Home computers: Over half the households in the United States with kids, for the first time ever, now own home computers. But home com[illegible] ownership rates drop by half for [illegible] nation's families with incomes under $35,000.

At the National Level

There's No 'Average' Teacher

But NEA research finds that, *on average*, today's teachers are the best educated, most experienced ever.

LouAnn Davenport, an art teacher in Springfield, Illinois, has a master's in her field and 10 years of experience in the classroom. She routinely works a 50-hour week, earns about $37,000 a year, and spends close to $500 of it on materials and supplies for her students.

In many ways, that makes her typical of today's teachers, according to new research from NEA.

In the nation's most comprehensive look at America's educators—NEA's *Status of the American Public School Teacher 1995-96*—researchers find that a typical teacher today:

- Is a 43-year-old married, white woman. Less than half of teachers report having school-aged children at home.
- Has a master's degree and 16 years of teaching experience.
- Spends an average of 49 hours a week on all teaching duties. Research shows that some teachers still prepare for classes completely on their own time.
- Spends $408 a year on out-of-pocket classroom expenses. "I'm glad to hear that I'm not alone in pouring myself into my teaching," says Davenport. "But I wonder why we have to put in so much of our own time and money when the extra time and money are obviously needed."
- Teaches full-time within her field of college preparation.
- Has ready access to video cassettes, television monitors, computers, instructional videotapes, and standard software—but not easy access to CD-ROM drives, networked computers, modems, and hypermedia.
- Chose teaching because of a desire to work with young people—and would choose to be a teacher again.
- Earned $35,549 a year teaching in the 1995-96 school year—and worked a second job.

Robert Pope

"People who aren't in education don't realize the money and time we put into our programs," says Illinois art teacher LouAnn Davenport.

This year's 311-page report is the latest in a 35-year history of NEA reports on the professional, economic, social, personal, and political status of America's teachers. Reports are issued every five years.

"This is the single most in-depth look at America's teachers," says Brooke Whiting, the NEA researcher who compiled the report.

Since the report was released in July, hundreds of newspapers, radio and television stations, and online news services have covered the story.

Its obvious conclusion, notes NEA President Bob Chase: "Children attending public schools today are in good hands."

—Tammy Reiss

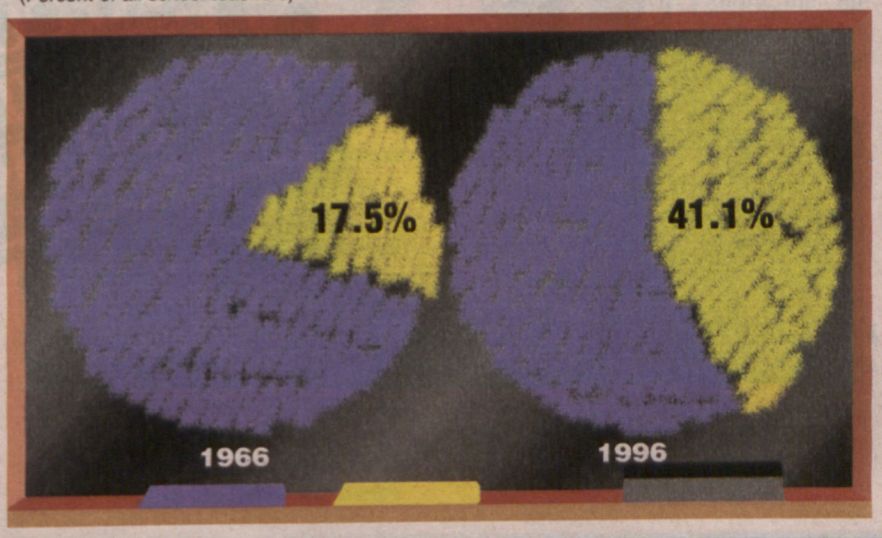
For More Information

For more details on the *Status of the American Public School Teacher, 1995-96*, visit *NEA Today*'s new Web site, www.nea.org/neatoday, and click on "Extra! Extra!"

Master's Degrees Among Public School Teachers

Public School Teachers 40-49 Years of Age

(Percent of all school teachers)



Trends in the Profession

Based on a nationally representative sample of 1,325 public school teachers, the new NEA *Status of the American Public School Teacher* uncovers several key trends.

- *Today's teachers are better prepared for the classroom than at any time in history.* More than half—54.5 percent—have a master's degree or a six-year diploma.

In addition, more teachers than ever before are participating in professional development activities. In 1996, 76.6 percent of teachers took part in system-sponsored professional development during the school year, compared with 58.6 percent in 1971.

- *Today's teachers are more experienced than at any time in history.* Teachers have an average of 16 years of full-time experience. Some 46.1 percent entered teaching more than 20 years ago, compared with 16.8 percent who entered within the past five years.
- *Today's teachers are taking on new roles and more responsibility for quality education.* Nearly half—42.5 percent—participated in curriculum committees in 1996, and more than half—51 percent—participated in other committees with responsibility for budgeting, personnel, and the like.

More than three-fourths of teachers work in schools that have partially implemented systems that give teachers and principals the authority to make key decisions on budget, curriculum, and the like.

- *Today's teachers are dedicated.* Teachers work well beyond the hours they are contracted to work and reach deep into their pockets to fund classroom supplies, books, and materials for their students.
- *Today's teachers are no more diverse than they were 35 years ago.* While the minority student population is growing rapidly, 90.7 percent of teachers are white, 7.3 percent Black, 1 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1 percent American Indian/Alaska Native. Four percent of all teachers are of Hispanic origin.

Class size: Nearly 1 million California students—954,000, to be exact—studied in smaller classes last [illegible]hanks to a massive state effort, [illegible]ed by the California Teachers Association, to reduce class size to 20 or less in the early grades.

High esteem: Which profession most benefits society? Most Americans believe teaching makes the most positive impact. The scores: teaching (cited as most beneficial by 57 percent of Americans), medicine (25 percent), law (1 percent). Source: Ad Council poll.

Tougher courses: In 1982, one high school grad in seven completed four years of English, at least three of social studies, and two of math and science. The latest stats: One half of all graduates have completed this basic curricular core.

New AFT leader: Sandra Feldman, a New York City teacher, is the new president of the American Federation of Teachers. She was elected by the union's executive council after the death of long-time AFT President Albert Shanker.

In the States

Better Odds in Georgia

In the 1997-98 school year, Georgia's general revenues will fund everything from a 6 percent teacher salary increase to programs like dropout prevention. Lottery proceeds? They'll be dedicated to needs like classroom technology, capital outlay for fast growing districts, and expansion of Georgia's pre-K program for 60,000 students. For more, go to www.gae.org/.

A Partnership Pays Off

Thanks in part to a growing economy, Oklahoma's state budget provides $92.4 million in new K-12 funding for the 1997-98 school year—the largest appropriation of new funds to "common education" since 1991. Making it all happen: a strong lobbying partnership between NEA's state affiliate and other members of the Oklahoma Education Coalition.

The Court Has Spoken

The New Jersey Supreme Court has ordered the state to provide at least $248 million in additional regular ed funding to 28 special needs districts. The New Jersey Education Association has pledged to help the state education commissioner develop the necessary programs.

Some Hoosier History

Indiana's new biennial budget provides a statewide average school funding boost of 4.8 percent each year, plus $15 million each year for local school technology grants. Budget "firsts" include textbooks for indigent students and grants for alternative education, professional development, and K-3 early intervention reading programs. For more, go to www.istain.org/.

Bus Safety a Priority

In response to a call by Missouri NEA and Governor Mel Carnahan, Missouri's new budget—which boosts education aid by more than $128 million over last year—includes $1.7 million for school bus safety arms, devices that keep kids from walking in front of buses.

In Florida, the Bet's Off

If your state lawmakers think a lottery alone can fund schools, pack 'em off to the Sunshine State.

Florida's schools have gained 650,000 students—and lost $12.8 billion—in the last 10 years.

That reality isn't lost on Pam Hughes, a teacher in Pinellas County, Florida. "We're actually receiving $310 less per student than we got five years ago," she says.

Hughes struggles to teach Spanish to 183 eighth graders—36 or 37 in a class—every day.

"I assign only four essays a year simply because of the time it takes to grade them," she says. "And some of us can expect 192 kids this fall."

Like the other 119 teachers—and 1,600 students—at Pinellas County's 16th Street Middle School, Hughes works in a portable classroom while their school is rebuilt from the ground up.

"There's no media center," Hughes says, "so kids can't do research, except on computer. And imagine trying to take ballet or theater in a portable classroom!"

All over Florida, school buildings are crumbling, classrooms are overcrowded and lack sufficient supplies and equipment, and thousands of students are on double sessions or in portable classrooms.

That's all thanks to a gamble that could take place in *your* state. Since 1986, revenue from wagering—in this case, the Florida lottery—has been used to replace regular, budgeted education funds.

The result? Public education's share of the Florida state budget has declined from 40 percent in 1986 to less than 35 percent today.

"Lottery dollars fill the top of the tub while legislators pull general revenue from the bottom to pay for non-education priorities," says Aaron Wallace, president of the Florida Teaching Profession-NEA.

In keeping with its original intent, the lottery "should only be used for supplemental purposes," Wallace says, "to enhance education through such programs as full-service schools and college scholarships."

Stonewalled by a conservative "no-new-tax" legislature, FTP-NEA has joined with parents and business and community groups in a "Reclaim Education's Share" Coalition.

The Coalition's goal: A November 1998 ballot initiative amending the state constitution to require that a fixed, 40 percent share of the budget fund public schools.

Public sentiment appears to be on the educators' side.

During the Coalition's first mass signature drive last Election Day, voters "tore petitions out of volunteers' hands," reports Jade Moore, executive director of the Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association.

"We planned for 5,000 signatures and collected 8,500 by noon!"

Pinellas County schools—in the St. Petersburg metro area—have suffered "death from a thousand cuts" because of reliance on the lottery, Moore says.

ESL and adult education programs have been slashed, class sizes have increased by 7 percent in just one year, and even the central administration has been downsized.

For many Floridians, the bet's off.

"Reliance on a vice like gambling is a cynical way to support our children," says FTP-NEA Executive Director John Ryor. "When there's an ounce of pressure, the legislature moves the money to other things.

In my view," Ryor adds, "we've bought prisons and underwritten Medicaid with lottery money."

Jim Tiller

Cross paths with Volusia County school district clerk Nilda Figueroa-Rodriguez, and you'll walk away wearing one of these buttons.

For More Information

For more on the Reclaim Education's Share campaign, go to www.ftp.nea.org/2res.htm.

The Bottom Line

College-bound: About two-thirds of last spring's high school graduates will enroll in college this fall, either at the two- or four-year level. In 1973, less than half the nation's high school grads went on to start higher education.

Sedentary students: Cutbacks in school phys ed programs may be having the impact many feared. Reports the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports: Only 1 percent of school-age children participate in organized physical activity.

Budget-breaker: The Cold War may be over, but U.S. military spending is still running at 85 percent of the Cold War annual average. Savings from base closings have largely been funneled into funding for new weapons systems.

Sparing the rod: Corporal punishment incidents in public schools are down 15 percent in the latest two-year period studied. Overall, these incidents are down 67 percent since 1984. School corporal punishment is legal in only two western nations.

At the Local Level

Public Jobs for Public Schools

NEA members in Massachusetts fight privatization efforts against teachers and support staff—and win.

Michael Quan

Teachers and support staff in Athol, Massachusetts celebrate their victories against subcontracting.

When teaching and support staff jobs are at risk, unity—mixed with muscle and a lot of hard work—can carry the day. Just ask the 145 members of the Athol Teachers Association.

In recent months, ATA members ended privatization of special ed services that affect teachers and support employees, abruptly halted the contracting out of food services, and forced the school district to rebid its current custodial management contract.

"This is one of the first times an NEA local has had to battle for both support staff and teacher jobs," says NEA staffer Han-il Lee, who helped ATA members in their efforts.

"Teachers may think privatization is for support services only," he notes, "but after contracting out two or three support classifications, school administrators often start going after special ed, drivers' ed, voc ed, and counseling positions."

To fight the privatization efforts, NEA members in Athol combined legal savvy, community organizing, and political action.

Last February, when the district hired Richard Millburn Schools to run Athol's special education program at an annual cost of $73,000, ATA filed an unfair labor practice charge, asserting that bargaining unit members were illegally displaced.

Then local leaders called state authorities, including Department of Education staffers, to report their concerns. They found that the contractor wasn't certified as a special education provider, and Richard Millburn Schools was forced to pull out.

A second subcontractor—ARAMARK, a $6 billion "management services" contractor operating in 11 countries—didn't hold up under ATA's bright lights either.

In 1996, the district hired ARAMARK to manage custodial services. Since then, NEA members recorded the company's public promises—with video cameras—and held them publicly accountable.

"We discovered that ARAMARK wasn't addressing the district's larger custodial needs, like asbestos removal," ATA President Bob Harris points out. "We see a lot of floor waxing to impress School Committee members—while it takes an Act of Congress to get a gallon of paint."

With the $178,000 it pays ARAMARK, Harris adds, "the district could hire five or six more custodians to do a much better job of keeping schools clean and safe."

In addition, after a complaint filed by an ATA member and a school board member, the Massachusetts Inspector General's office found that ARAMARK's custodial contract was improperly bid. The district must now rebid the entire contract.

When the district threatened to hire ARAMARK to take over yet another group of employees—its food service workers—NEA members got active in their community.

They helped elect two anti-privatization candidates to the local school board. Harris sent out regular news releases on the pitfalls of privatization. And ATA members took an anti-privatization petition door-to-door, collecting 2,100 signatures in a week.

"Not a lot of public education had to go on," explains UniServ rep Mike Sireci. Athol has been hit hard by industrial downsizing and outsourcing, he says, "so workers here understand what subcontracting means."

As a result of ATA's efforts, the Athol school board recently dropped efforts to contract out its food services.

Athol school employees have succeeded in holding off the "privateers"—for now. And, in the process, they've added a few new members to their rolls.

Inspired by ATA's mobilization against ARAMARK, 25 Athol food services workers voted unanimously in June for ATA representation.

For More Information

For details, call or fax Athol Teachers Association President Bob Harris at 508/249-3070.

A Two-Sided Victory

By mobilizing the community, 300 members of the Hopatcong (New Jersey) Education Association have stopped the district from replacing certified school nurses with licensed practical nurses *and* from contracting out custodial services to Marriott. Teachers and support staff distributed fliers and talked to neighbors at mini-malls, school entrances, churches, plays, and school board meetings.

Come On Back!

Custodians in Milton, Vermont, who were laid off and replaced with contract workers must be rehired and paid back wages at 12 percent interest, the Vermont Labor Relations Board ruled recently. Vermont-NEA took the case to the board after the district failed to negotiate its decision to privatize custodial work last year.

Something in the Food

Following a two-day sickout by NEA food service employees, school administrators in Greenville, Mississippi, have decided not to contract out cafeteria work or place Workfare recipients in the kitchens.

Now They Tell Us

Striking Pulaski County (Arkansas) teachers had the right to walk and should not have been ordered back to school last September, a federal judge has ruled. These NEA members are still bargaining for a new contract—and looking at their options, including another strike.

An Epiphany of Sorts

When a local newspaper columnist blasted her schools, Hampton (Virginia) Education Association member Margaret Bundick invited the critic into her classroom. Afterwards, the visitor wrote that "Bundick does the best she can for her problem students," conceded that schools can't be "custodians for society's problems," and stressed that money should be spent on "paying teachers to teach"—not massive overhead.

Contracted-out schools: The Edison Project, the for-profit company started by Channel One founder Chris [illegible], will manage 25 public schools [illegible] states in the 1997-98 school year. The expected student enrollment in the schools will total 13,000.

Voucher-boosters: Oklahoma Congressman Ernest Istook is leading the charge for a fall vote on a "religious freedom" amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The amendment would allow tax dollars for private religious school tuition.

Parochial schools: Nearly half the students in American Catholic schools—46 percent—now come from families in the upper quarter of income-earners. The average annual parochial high school tuition now stands at $3,100.

School reviews: Corporate guidebooks to local public schools are popping up in metropolitan areas across the United States. The first entries in the guidebook sweepstakes: St. Louis, San Francisco, New York, and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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*Life members must be actively employed in the field of education.

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High school teacher Jeff Orlinsky doesn't monkey around. He knows that using humor in the classroom is one way to get students to go ape over learning. Details on page 19.

Vanessa

Innovators

Multiculturalism Matters

Innovator:
Norine Dresser

Job:
Folklorist, author, and columnist for the *Los Angeles Times*

Bright Idea:
Last year, Dresser published *Multicultural Manners: New Rules of Etiquette for a Changing Society* (Wiley, $14.95), an anecdotal guide to understanding cues, beliefs, and habits of different cultures.

"Teachers are at the forefront on facing diversity issues," says Dresser. "They face a number of people from different cultures at the same time. And it gets very confusing."

For example, at a parent/teacher meeting, a teacher may decide to focus on a child's weaker skills instead of mentioning her strengths. A few days later, the teacher notices bumps and bruises on the child—whose parents come from a culture where lack of achievement is met with punishment.

In dealing with parents from cultures like these, Dresser suggests that educators consider focusing on the positive or re-evaluating how they present information to these parents.

The key steps toward handling multicultural issues in the classroom include learning about different cultures, respecting the differences, and adapting to accommodate these differences.

"If teachers demonstrate that they're open to learning about different cultures," notes Dresser, "then they'll show students how important it is to be respectful toward differences."

Impact:
Dresser originally wrote *Multicultural Manners* for a general audience, but teachers are the book's largest market.

For More:
E-mail Dresser at norined@earthlink.net.

Closing the Door on Danger

Innovator:
Duane Little

Job:
Bus mechanic, Newcomerstown, Ohio

Bright Idea:
Schoolchildren aren't safe until school buses are safe, says NEA member Duane Little.

To that end, Little has developed a device that sets off an alarm if a bus pulls away while a child's drawstring is caught in the door.

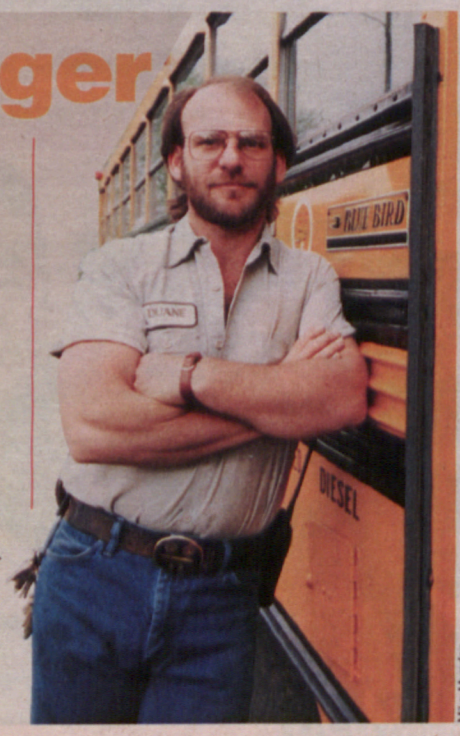
This school bus door alarm consists of a pressure-sensitized strip attached vertically to the outside of the bus. The tension from a tightened string triggers the alarm.

"Bus drivers' attention span is stretched far and thin," says Little. "This device gives them a little more security."

Little, who has a patent on the device, adds, "I don't ever want a kid to get caught. But if one does, this may prevent a tragedy."

Impact:
Newcomerstown and two other nearby districts have equipped several buses with the alarm system. Ohio state officials are considering whether to include it in the state's minimum standard options list for buses.

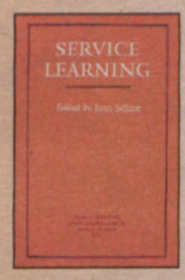
For More:
Contact Little at 614/498-5507.



Mike Munden

Called to Serve

Service Learning
Edited by Joan Schine. Distributed by the University of Chicago Press, 212 pp. $24.



This collection of essays from the National Society for the Study of Education looks at different service learning programs across the country—how they were developed, and how they serve a higher cause. Excerpted below is an essay by Norris M. Haynes and James P. Comer, both of the Yale University Child Study Center.

"The value of a good education lies in the extent to which it prepares students for life as productive members of their communities and the wider society.

Schools in many ways are microcosms of the society. Therefore, the adult members of the school community—parents and staff—must support the total development of all children, preparing each child to be a productive, contributing member of society.

The need for understanding, tolerance, fairness, and respect in American society has never been greater. Service to others, particularly those who are in need and less fortunate, and service to the larger society through unselfish acts of caring and kindness are defining characteristics of a great and compassionate nation.

But because of the increasing pluralism in our society, uncertainty about the future, and skepticism surrounding services to the poor and the most needy, there sometimes seems to be a retreat by many from the altruism and compassion which have helped to make this nation great.

Many educators believe that service learning in schools can nurture these qualities and should be an important and integrated component of students' educational experience to prepare the for life and for service in the larger community."

Mike Barber

The Power To **Reform**

Innovator:
Carl Upchurch

Job:
Author of *Convicted in the Womb: One Man's Journey from Prisoner to Peacemaker* (Bantam, $21.95)

Bright Idea:
For many years, no one would have called Carl Upchurch's prospects bright. Raised in a dank world of drugs, alcohol, and prostitution, he dropped out of his South Philadelphia elementary school and descended into a life of violent crime.

While serving time at the federal penitentiary at Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, Upchurch discovered a book of Shakespearean sonnets under a wobbly table leg. With that, he began a journey in which he "discovered the magic of learning"—a journey that ended with a college degree.

Today Upchurch works tirelessly to inspire society to remember those kids who hold the same contempt for education that he once did.

"Their needs are quite different [illegible] those children who come prepared and motivated. I think these students need to be segregated," Upchurch told *NEA Today*.

"I know that's a radical thought. But these children probably have never known what it is to be appreciated," says Upchurch. "They won't be interested in 2+2 because they don't know that they matter, that they count.

"I'm aware that people say schools aren't there for that purpose," Upchurch adds, "but I say they should be. We need to revamp the educational system to meet today's needs. And if these kids dominate the culture, then the culture must meet those needs."

Upchurch acknowledges that teachers already face "an extraordinary responsibility. But these children can be reached, and there's no place other than school where they can hear that."

Impact:
Upchurch addresses groups nationwide—including kids facing the same challenges he's overcome. Late next year, Showtime will release a movie based on his book.

For More:
Write to Upchurch at 2188 East Main St., Apt. D, Columbus, OH 43209. For information on upcoming speaking engagements, call 800/285-9373.

Taking Parents as **Partners**

Scott Suchman

For 30 years, Dorothy Rich has stood her ground: Parental involvement is critical to the success of both a child and a school. Now, in What Do We Say? What Do We Do? Vital Solutions for Children's Educational Success *(Tom Doherty Associates, $12.95), Rich addresses problems children face and suggests ways educators and parents can support and guide them.*

Q Why have you focused on parental involvement as the linchpin for a child's success?

A I figured out, as a teacher myself, that I had to have the help and the support and the real teaching involvement of the family. There's no way that the best teacher can do the best job by himself or herself.

I'm not interested in the home doing the work of the school or the school doing the work of the home. It's a complementary relationship.

Q How much should parents help children with their homework?

A I want to put across the message that it is the child's work, and the child's responsibility.

Q But isn't homework a classic way for parents to be involved in their child's learning?

A For many parents, there's a sense of confusion over homework. Sometimes there's a sense of competition—if some parents do their children's work, then others feel like they should, so their child can keep up.

The parents are there to encourage and support their children—not do homework assignments for them. If they do, they shouldn't be surprised if later their children expect them to continue to take care of life's assignments for them.

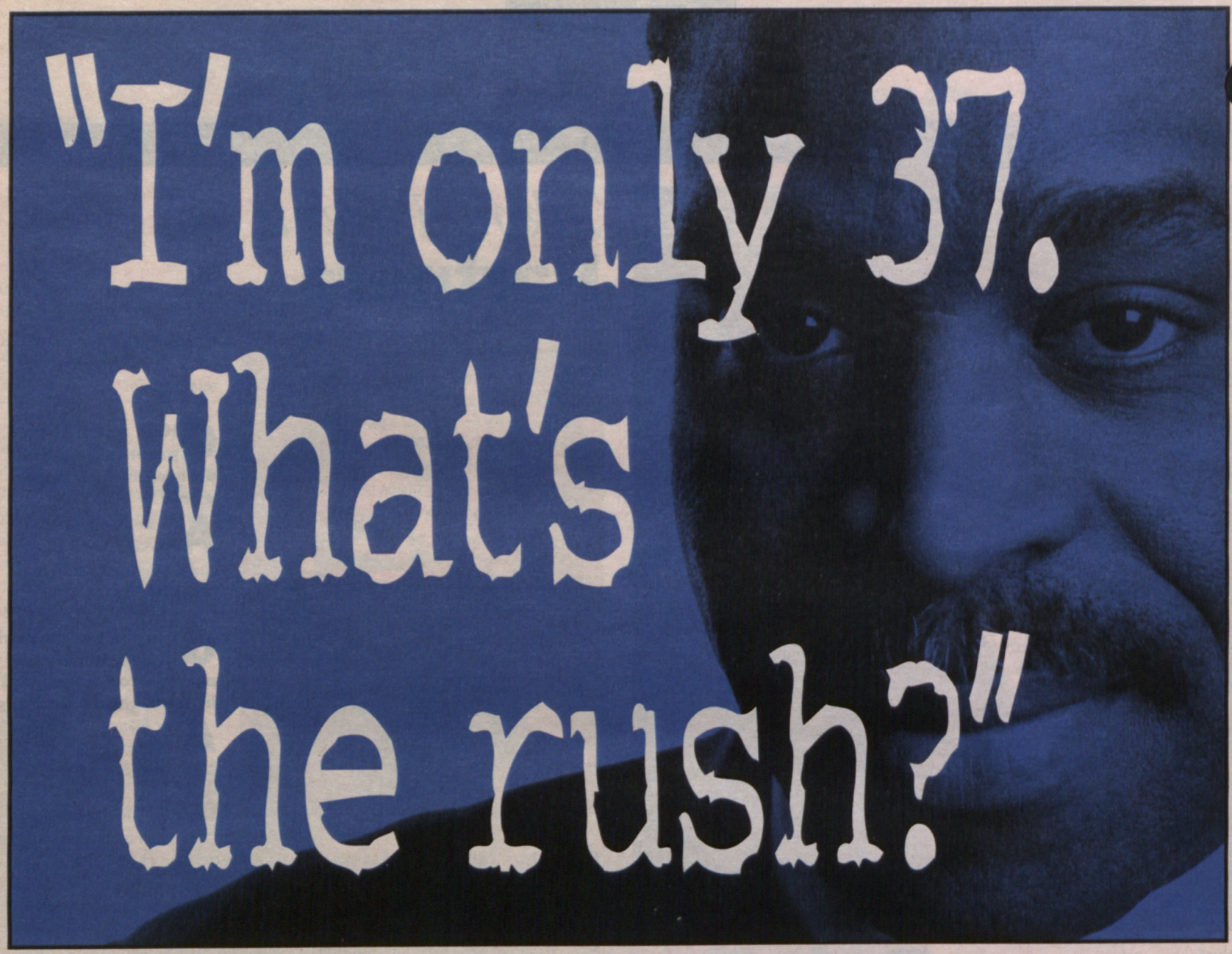
Talk live to Rich via the Internet on Tuesday, September 30, at 8 p.m. EDT. Visit NEA Today*'s Web site (www.nea.org/neatoday) to learn how to join this interactive chat.*

And for a down-home guide to skills children need to succeed, look for the third edition of Rich's book Mega-Skills, *to be published this year with a foreword by NEA President Bob Chase. For more information, call the Home and School Institute at 202/466-3633 or visit the Web at www.MegaSkillsHSI.org.*

Tips for Teaching with **Technology**

1. Start small, if possible—perhaps five students with project ideas.
2. Locate two or three mentors, or use teachers in a student's area of interest as mentors.
3. Seek out grants that will help fund the cost of some of the materials you'll need.
4. Contact your local community associations or senior center and ask if there are public relation projects your students can do for them.
5. Ask software dealers if you can purchase demo copies of expensive programs such as PageMaker and PhotoShop. This will let you try the programs at reduced cost.

Source: *Technology for Diverse Learners*, NEA Professional Library, $9.95 for NEA members, 800/229-4200.



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Becky Jones, NEA VIP

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VBNT0997

Inside Scoop

The Controversy Over Service Learning

Service learning gives citizenship a facelift. But are its effects more than skin deep?

Definition please.

Take community service projects, integrate them into the curriculum, and you've got service learning. The goal of this merger: to teach students citizenship through experience.

Three factors distinguish service learning from traditional volunteering or community service: in class preparation, the service itself, and structured reflection.

Arranging for students to volunteer in a nursing home is community service. Combining the project with an examination of the physiology of aging or cross-cultural attitudes toward the elderly—that's service learning.

How hot?

Hundreds of school districts now require service learning as part of the curriculum, while many others offer service learning options.

But definitions are broad, and much of what is labeled "service learning" is really school-based community service—a significant trend in its own right but lacking the curricular component.

Maryland is the only state to make service learning a graduation requirement. Beginning with the class of 1997, all students must complete 75 hours of service between sixth and 12th grades.

How does it work?

Approaches vary, from entire courses built around a service project to schools that simply expect students to find their own volunteer opportunities.

Typical service learning activities include working in a hospital or soup kitchen or cleaning up a park.

In some cases, students receive credit for regular coursework that has a service component. Cosmetology students may style hair for retirement home residents, for example, or a social studies class may put on a play about racism.

The option to earn hours in ways that "aren't traditional and aren't agency-driven" is one reason why the Maryland State Teachers Association dropped its opposition to the service [illegible]late, says President Karl Pence.

Why bother?

Service learning builds good citizens, so the thinking goes.

Joe Follman, director of Florida Learn & Serve, says his two-year study of 50,000 students found that service learning increases grades and attendance and reduces discipline problems (see chart).

Service learning doesn't take place in a test tube, Follman says, "but the trends are so strong I feel safe in saying there is a clear, positive impact."

John Briscoe, executive director of Visions International, which coordinates construction-based service projects, says service learning will cause the "proportion of kids going on to further education to increase dramatically."

A student who spends any time volunteering in a hospital, for example, will learn that good jobs require continued education, he adds.

Many say service learning projects also help shape students' career aspirations. One Maryland senior changed her intended college major from medicine to special education after volunteering in an elementary school.

Does mandating service make a difference?

The National Center for Education Statistics studied schools with organized community service projects. Those that "mandated" service had a 56 percent participation rate, compared to 52 percent in schools where service was an option.

For schools that required service but gave students no help in arranging for projects, the participation rate was 19 percent. So, NCES concludes, students are generally willing to volunteer but need help getting started.

What's the downside?

"Service learning can be a logistical nightmare," writes Rahima C. Wade, the editor of a service learning guide. "Funds, transportation, scheduling, volunteer help, supplies—all these and more can face a teacher who attempts to establish a service learning experience for her class."

Professional development to help educators handle service learning projects often gets short shrift. Says MSTA's Pence: "In this program, like in every other, it's the real weakness. It's the afterthought."

Maryland has yet to designate the funds to help schools with supervising, teaching, and administering the program.

The time demands of service learning can be burdensome for students, too.

"There are a lot of students who need to have jobs," says Janette Bell, president of the Prince George's County (Maryland) Educators Association. "That's 75 hours when they could have been earning money."

And then there are the recipients of all this good will. Pence notes that "many community service agencies are not equipped to take on this onslaught of volunteers"—either because they become overwhelmed trying to accommodate students desperate to get their hours in, or because they just aren't able to adequately supervise teens.

Who's throwing stones?

Some parents and educators charge that service learning is just another educational fad that drains valuable time away from academics.

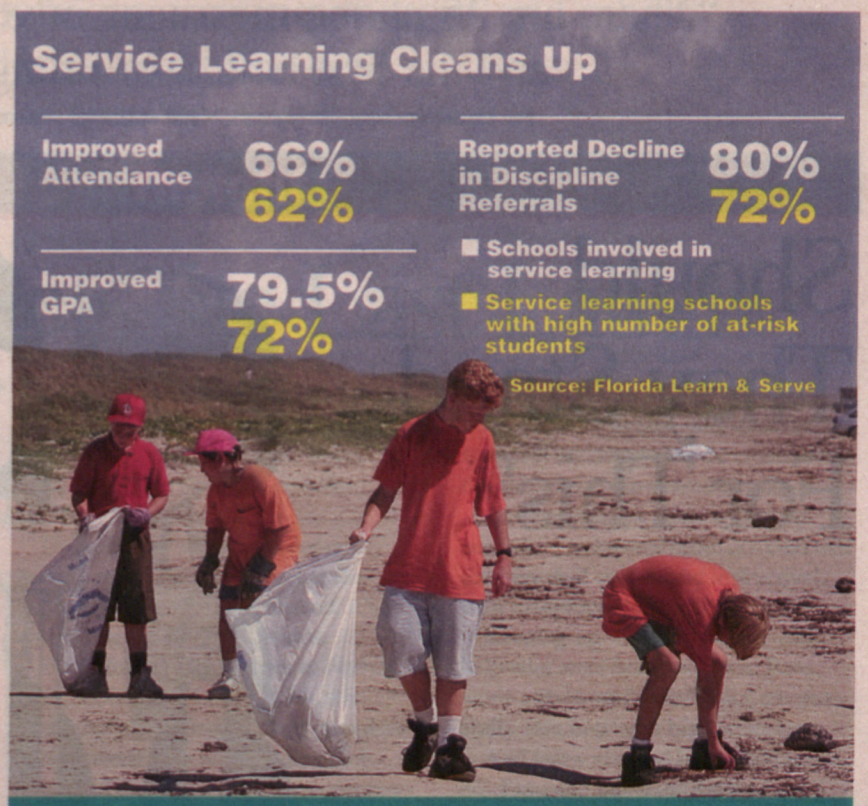
Mandatory service draws the sharpest criticism, however, from parents and students who liken it to involuntary servitude.

At least three districts have been involved in high-profile lawsuits over service requirements, including one in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where three students sued the school board for violating the constitutional prohibition on slavery. The students lost.

Where's NEA on this?

NEA believes that service learning programs should be encouraged. They may be required for graduation. NEA also advocates that educators be given appropriate compensation, planning time, and resources to implement the programs.

—Bonnie Gardner



Florida students involved in service-learning improved their attendance, grades, and conduct. Students characterized as at-risk made even greater gains.

Need More Information?

- *Community Service-Learning: A Guide to Including Service in the Public School Curriculum*, Rahima C. Wade, ed., State University of New York Press, 1997.
- The Maryland Student Service Alliance has service learning project ideas and sells curricular materials. Call 410/767-0358 or go to www.sailor.lib.md.us/mssa.
- The National Service-Learning Cooperative Clearinghouse has a wealth of information online, at www.nicsl.coled.umn.edu.
- The Corporation for National Service administers Learn and Serve America, which awards grants to schools for service learning programs. Call 202/606-5000 or go to www.cns.gov/ for details.

Students &

Good Stuff

Value Building
Rethinking Our Classrooms examines ways that educators can promote values of community, justice, and equality—and build academic skills. The 208-page publication includes articles, reproducible handouts, lesson plans, and resource lists. $6 plus $3.50 shipping, with reduced rates for orders of multiple copies. Write to Rethinking Schools, 1001 E. Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212 or call 800/669-4192.

Educators' Dictionary
Not quite clear on what OBE is? How about the NBPTS? Well, help is here from the ASCD. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development has just published *The Language of Learning: A Guide to Education Terms*, a 114-page book that goes beyond acronyms to offer concise definitions of many of the education terms being tossed around today. $14.95 from ASCD, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314-1453, or call 800/933-2723.

Prime Location
Helping Your Child Learn Geography offers activities that help children ages five through 10 master skills such as identifying the absolute location of a place or using a bar scale. This 32-page booklet, developed with contributions from the National Geographic Society and the U.S. Geological Survey, is available on the Web at www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Geography/index.html. If that's too much to key in, the booklet can be ordered for 50 cents a copy by writing to Consumer Information Center, Dept. 372D, Pueblo, CO 81009.

Learning Disabilities
LD Online, a Web resource from PBS station WETA, is dedicated to improving the lives of children with disabilities. At www.ldonline.org, educators, parents, and students can exchange ideas and look up articles with the latest information on learning disabilities. Each week, the site celebrates the art and writing of two new children with learning disabilities. For more information, write to The Learning Disabilities Project at WETA, P.O. Box 2626, Washington, DC 20013, call 703/998-3293, or E-mail ldonline@weta.com.

You know you have a problem when...

"There are 25 phone messages in your mailbox—and the first bell hasn't rung yet."

Bob Kaplan, seventh/eighth grade social studies teacher, Schaumburg, Illinois

Dilemma

Should They Stand For This?

It's the start of a new year. What do you do when you have more students than chairs?

In the junior high school where I teach, the number of students in one room varies from period to period by as many as 15.

We don't have enough desks to keep the maximum number that may be needed in each classroom. So we have some of the students carry their desks from classroom to classroom when they're headed for a class that has a large enrollment.

Each student soon develops his or her own style of desk carrying. Some of them lift the desk over their heads, while others carry it on the side—taking up most of the hallway.

Still others straddle the desk and carry it down the hall, pretending they're riding a horse—which does seem logical, since I teach in Wyoming!

Kathy Vetter
Middle school special ed teacher
Wheatland, Wyoming

In industrial arts/tech ed, overcrowding presents special problems. More students than work stations means special safety concerns and material/equipment problems.

In my area, students complete written safety exercises before any use of machinery. This activity sorts and staggers the students' assignments, preventing an overload at any one station.

I also have to design smaller, quicker activities for each student.

Jerry Bekaert
Middle school industrial arts teacher
Coatesville, Pennsylvania

I try to create other sitting areas, if we can't use desks. I've brought in beanbag chairs, and we've had class sitting in a circle on the floor.

Sometimes we use alternate sites in the building for activities—for example, the media center or the cafeteria—and when it's possible, we'll go outside.

The desks belong to all of us, so I also rotate students based on the activities we're doing at the time. I'll have one group on the floor in a circle, and others working at the desks.

Kids don't need to sit at desks all the time anyway. Teaching is about being flexible. It's not about sitting in chairs.

Doris Glover
Elementary special needs teacher
Atlanta, Georgia

I've gone around and begged for desks.

Pamela Dukes
Middle school teacher
Dallas, Texas

At one point, I had 30 kindergartners in each of my classes. A very structured classroom worked really well, so the kids always knew where to be and where to go.

I set up subject-related activities in different areas of the classroom: science center, reading corner, listening center, math center, and others. When we sat to do full-group activities on the floor in a circle, we just had to keep making the circle bigger to include everyone.

Kelly Endl
Kindergarten teacher
Beloit, Wisconsin

Got an Answer?

How do you balance competition and cooperation in the classroom?
Send your answer to *NEA Today* by regular mail, Fax 202/822-7206, E-mail at **dilemma2@neatoday.** Include your name, educational position, and phone numbers.

Strategies

You know you've been successful when...

"Your students begin arriving an hour and a half before the first bell!"

Sandra Allen, sixth grade teacher, New Brunswick, New Jersey

Delight

Learning Gets the Last Laugh

Humor in class can break down teenage attitudes and draw students to learning.

Jeff Orlinsky's students were awed. He promised to lecture from shark-infested waters.

So, warning students to stand back, the California biology teacher donned a lab coat over his bathing suit, stepped into a kiddie pool, and bravely taught while dodging a gnashing wind-up plastic shark

Students giggled and guffawed. But Orlinsky had their attention as he lectured on marine biology.

When it comes to reaching high school students, a little humor can go a long way as a teaching tool.

Laughter, a natural part of elementary school classes, too often is considered taboo in high school, as educators focus on the serious business of preparing students for college or work, notes Jerry King, a former teacher and NEA member in Virginia.

"We're missing the whole point," he says. "Laughter does not prohibit learning, it enhances it."

Using humor in the classroom doesn't mean cracking jokes at the expense of lecture time. Instead, it's a tool to engage students' minds.

For Orlinsky, who teaches at Warren High School near Los Angeles, this means having students dissect pumpkins at Halloween for a unit on plant biology—and then having a carving contest to make jack-o'-lanterns that look like him. Or demonstrating primate behavior by dressing in a gorilla costume and swinging from campus trees.

Such theatrics don't come naturally to all teachers. King, who now teaches educators how to use humor, suggests that some may need to start small, by wearing a funny button or tie.

Or try a bulletin board or corner of the room where students and teachers can post cartoons and other material that tickles their funny bones.

"Using humor means trying to create an atmosphere in your class where kids are not afraid to mess up," he says.

Normally reticent high schoolers may feel freer to talk, and students may feel encouraged to be creative and develop their own senses of humor.

Of course, many teens will try to push the envelope of taste. It's vital that teachers deal swiftly and instructively with inappropriate humor, King says.

Keeping up with pop culture can help educators hone their wit. Puns, word games, and mnemonics are generally safe bets with high schoolers.

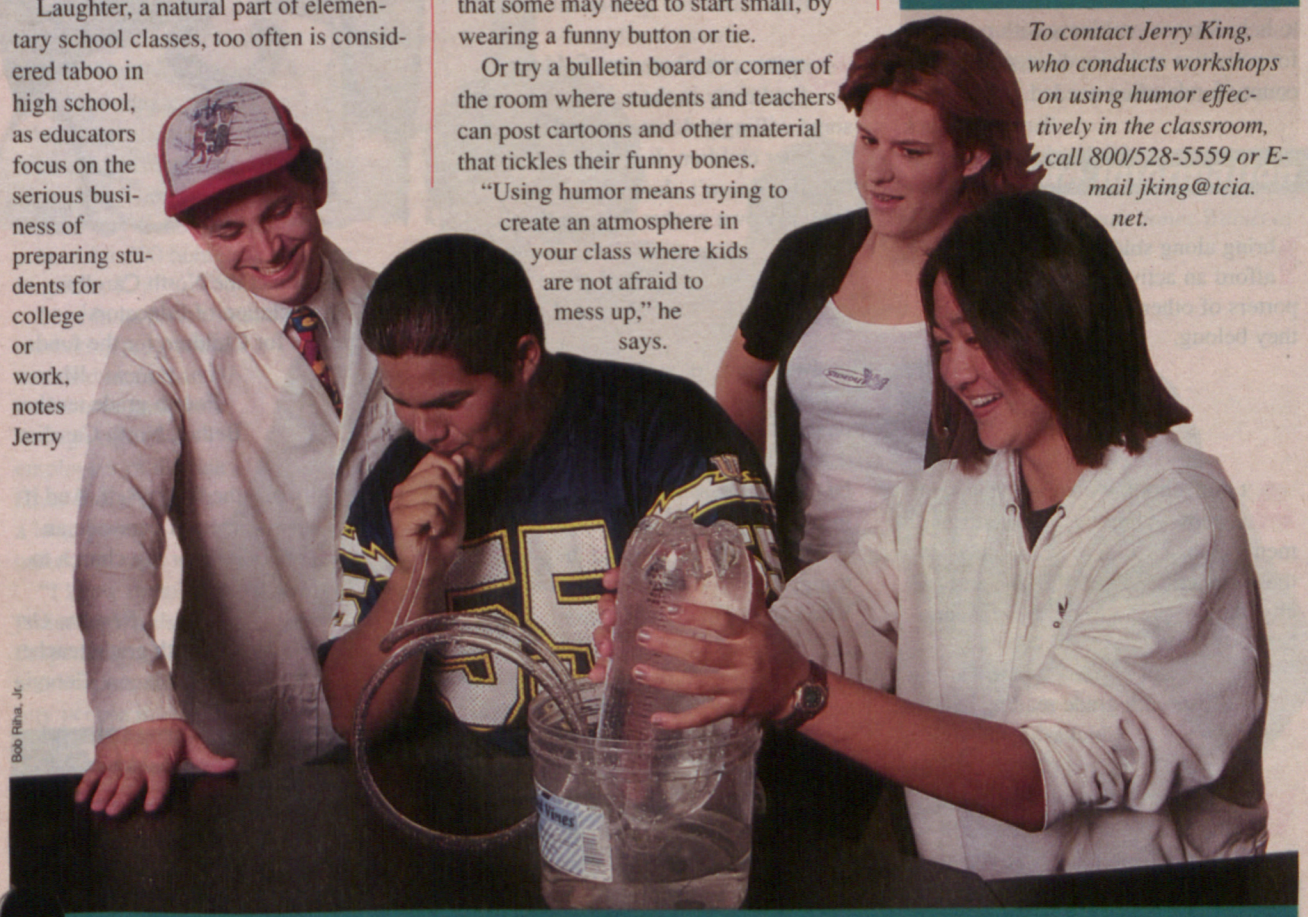
And teens respond best when teachers direct the humor at themselves.

Orlinsky adds that humor makes his job fun. "You have to laugh with the students at least once a day, or it's not a good day," he says.

—Bonnie Gardner

For More Information

To contact Jerry King, who conducts workshops on using humor effectively in the classroom, call 800/528-5559 or E-mail jking@tcia.net.



Bob Riha, Jr.

Students grab a laugh and catch a breath as California biology teacher Jeff Orlinsky helps them demonstrate the different lung capacities of athletes versus non-athletes.

Idea Exchange

Pick a Card, Any Card

In my math classes, several interdisciplinary activities are completed by cooperative groups. To save time and get every student involved with every role, I use a deck of cards.

If an activity requires six three-member groups, I pick three suits (say, clubs, spades, and hearts) and draw the ace through six for each suit. I explain the task for each suit (leader, recorder, reporter), and students draw cards at random.

From the draw, students get their group number (from the number on the card) and task (from the suit). Through the course of the year, each student will likely have served in each role at least once.

Bill Hill
High school math/physics teacher
Liberty, Kentucky

Completing the Pass

To make sturdy lavatory passes, I have two plastic cookie cutters—a yellow one shaped like a boy and a blue girl. I loop lanyard through the opening, tie it, and apply clear nail polish to keep the knot closed.

This beats wooden passes, which get grungy looking, and laminated ones, which fall apart. Plastic ones clean easily and are sturdy.

Karen Gronau
Second grade teacher
Perry Hall, Maryland

A Life's Story

In my writing unit on biographies, students select a classmate's name from a hat, interview the student, write a biography, and work in peer editing groups for revisions.

The students read their stories aloud and complete a self-grading sheet. And the final copies go to the students featured in the biography.

Karen Carriera
Middle school teacher
Groton, Connecticut

Want More?

These tips are all from NEA's new E-mail service, Works4Me. It's weekly, and it's free! To sign up, just send an E-mail to lyris@list.nea.org.

- In the "subject" line, type: sign me up, NEA!
- In the message block, type: subscribe Works4Me
- Send the message.

To submit your own tip, E-mail it to: owner-Works4Me@list.nea.org.

Families &

Good Stuff

At Bat for High Standards
NEA has joined the Education Excellence Partnership to strengthen the academic future of America's children. The Partnership is sponsoring a series of public service announcements—featuring Major League Baseball players—that invite parents to call for a brochure to find out more about higher academic standards, what to expect from a child's school, and how to reinforce learning at home. For a copy of the brochure, call 800/BE-SMART. And send your comments on the project to the Partnership at 1615 L St., N.W., Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20036.

Cooking Up Support
The Activist Cookbook provides "recipes" for educators seeking to promote public education in the community. The 100-page book, filled with eye-catching graphics, photographs, and anecdotes, explores creative approaches to social change and how to turn a viewpoint into "news" for the print and electronic media. Included are strategies and tactics for talking to the media and the public. $16 from United for a Fair Economy, 37 Temple Pl., Boston, MA 02111, phone 617/423-2148, E-mail stw@stw.org.

Need Help?
Parents for Public Schools started five years ago as a band of 20 parents in Mississippi who wanted to recruit families to public schools. The organization now has chapters in 20 states, all working to mobilize parents to build excellent public schools and stronger communities. For more information, contact Parents for Public Schools, P.O. Box 12807, Jackson, MS 39236-2807, 800/880-1222.

Kids and Handguns
Ten children are killed by handguns every day. Cease Fire, Inc., a national public education campaign, has created a powerful brochure for parents and other members of the community informing them of the dangers of keeping handguns at home. Included are important facts about gun violence and how to get rid of an unwanted handgun. $5 for 25 brochures. To order, contact Cease Fire, Inc., P.O. Box 33424, Washington, DC 20033-0424, E-mail info@ceasefire.org.

You know you have a problem when...

"Parents don't participate in school activities and only come to school in response to a child's negative behavior."

Watina Stills, special education teacher, Camden, New Jersey

Dilemma

Not an Even Playing Field

What do you do when a student's family can't afford an activity?

At our school, we've turned our staff holiday party into a not-so-silent white elephant auction. With the proceeds, we establish a fund to help less fortunate kids and their families—and use part of the money to cover those who can't afford an activity.

Charlene Hansen
Middle school social studies teacher
Moses Lake, Washington

Students fill out a confidential questionnaire at the beginning of the school year. Their counselor uses it to help foresee problems with paying for activities and uses discretionary county funds when needed.

Waynetta Black
High school counselor
Mobile, Alabama

I bring along students who can't afford an activity as mascots or supporters of other competitors, just so they belong.

Patrick Bates
High school theater teacher
Utica, Michigan

At our school, we've asked several groups—churches, women's and men's clubs—to serve as mentors for these students. Very willingly, and quietly, they're proud to help. Our secret heroes!

Jana Dabney
Sixth/seventh grade reading teacher
Chickasha, Oklahoma

We have a "pencil and eraser selling fund" for emergencies like this—and dedicated teachers and staff who foot the bill themselves a lot.

Kathy Peterson
Elementary physical education teacher
New Baltimore, Michigan

I charge all the participants a little extra in anticipation of such a possibility.

Steve Reid
Fifth grade teacher
Oceanside, California

I loan my personal computer equipment to students who don't have access to the needed technology at home.

Ray Barrios
High school teacher
Cut Off, Louisiana

Parents contribute to a field trip fund early in the school year, and some willingly donate toward the cost for other children. It always balances out. If it doesn't, the money comes from my own pocket. It's worth it!

Patty Lodegaard
Third grade teacher
San Jose, California

I always pay for supplies or activities for any of my children who are unable to afford them. It's done very discreetly, because all children need to be treated the same way to maintain or improve a positive self-image.

Many other teachers do the same thing, so as not to embarrass students who can't help their situation.

Patti Lochner
Kindergarten teacher
Fort Myers, Florida

We ask our PTA to help fund any activity that is not affordable to a student. Our student senate also helps subsidize the fund. And there are parents who are willing to donate, too.

Chisato Kanagi
Elementary school teacher
Newhall, California

We contact the North Carolina Association of Educators' Foundation for Children for the funds.

Jackie Wooten
Fourth grade teacher
Bethel, North Carolina

I normally pay the fee myself. And if that's not sufficient, I persuade an organization, doctor, or my church to pay for the activity.

Renarta Orr
Fourth grade teacher
Macon, Georgia

Got an Answer

How do you make learning a family activity?
Send your answer to us by regular mail, Fax 202/822-7206, or E-mail dilemma2@neatoday.org.
Include your name, educational position, and phone numbers.

Communities

You know you've been successful when...

"The superintendent refers to your advice when dealing with a complaint from the community or a parent."

Dan Madejczyk, middle school social studies teacher, Bridgman, Michigan

Delight

There's No Place Called Home

But at an Arizona school for homeless students, educators team with volunteers to fill in the blanks.

Twenty-five cupcakes. The 12-year-old couldn't understand why he was expected to eat so many until his mentor, a utility company employee, explained.

The cupcakes are for the whole class, he was told. And since it's your birthday, you get to hand them out.

The mentor had brought a birthday card and treats to school with hardly a second thought. But they were simple kindnesses the boy had never experienced, and he was moved to tears.

Such scenes are what teacher Cyndy Jones Woods calls "the magic that occurs" when mentors are paired with students from Phoenix's Thomas J. Pappas Elementary School, a magnet school for 300 homeless children in grades K-8.

Now in its fourth year, the mentoring program has matched more than 60 students in grades six through eight with employees of the Salt River Project (SRP), a local power utility.

"I knew these junior high kids desperately needed community people in their lives who could show hem a different path," says Woods, one of the program's ...tors. ...e mentors spend two hours a month in the school with their assigned child, helping with schoolwork, visiting the computer lab, playing games, or talking.

The volunteers also help educators round out the children's lives, leaving staff with more time to focus on academics—and on finding additional resources for these children.

Mentors model the social skills that these children don't take for granted, such as how to order in a restaurant or properly answer a telephone.

Mentors also help students set goals and give them a better understanding of the work world. Students shadow their mentors at SRP for a day, returning from their visits fascinated with typing memos and attending meetings, Woods says.

Students take great pride in having "an SRP," their slang for mentors.

Woods tries to prepare mentors for their assignment. She holds an orientation to explain how home-less children are different—more prone to violence and outbursts and unable to deal with even minor problems.

And most students at Pappas attend for only a few months before moving on, for good reasons or bad, leaving mentors to cope with a bond that often has no closure.

But no matter how fleeting, the one-on-one time that a homeless student spends with a mentor is invaluable, says Woods, who's seen these students blossom socially and academically.

For these children, success also comes in small measures.

"I tell the mentors that they'll know they've been successful when they hear the students laugh," Woods notes.

"If you can give them a moment where they feel safe enough to laugh," says the veteran teacher, "you've given them childhood."

—Bonnie Gardner

Jeff Topping

Don B. Stevenson

Community volunteers like Dottie Tikhan (above) create "magic" moments for students, says NEA member Cyndy Jones Woods (inset), who teaches at a magnet school for homeless children in Phoenix.

For More Information

Contact Cyndy Jones Woods at 602/254-9313.

Idea Exchange

Computer Connection

During a conference with a parent, I was explaining the technology we use in the classroom. Afterward, the mother told me, "I have no idea what you just said." Many of my students' parents had never even used a computer before, while their children use computers and the Internet everyday.

So my students now teach their parents, leading them through a one-hour technology lesson at school on a topic of their choice. It's exciting to see parents learn to like and understand technology when they had feared it before.

The project has really made a connection between parents and children. And the parents are so grateful and excited to be learning alongside their children.

Timi Hecker
Tenafly, New Jersey

Food for Thought

To help promote public schools in our community, the Owosso Education Association printed up paper placemats featuring the positive things happening in our district and distributed them in restaurants throughout the area.

We first published 25,000 placemats—and ended up needing more than 100,000! We chose six family-owned restaurants and asked them to use the placemats for four months. Each restaurant monthly offered a free dinner for two—a great way to draw people in and get them excited about the project.

The theme of the placemats was "Partners for Progress," and it really was a partnership—our Association and the Owosso Board of Education had a dual role. The success of the project really shows that it takes everybody to make schools work.

Lois Smithers
Owosso, Michigan

Share Your Ideas

You can pass along your classroom tips to *NEA Today*'s over 2.2 million readers in one of four ways:

- By mail: *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036
- By phone: 202/822-7201
- By Fax: 202/822-7206
- By E-mail: Ideas@neatoday.nea.org

Bits & Bytes

Bytes for Beginners

When I went shopping for a computer, I thought I was armed with enough knowledge to make a sound purchasing decision. But I quickly became confused by all the memory options—RAM, VRAM, SIMMS, DIMMS, DRAM. What do these terms mean?

jrl@aol.com
Honolulu, Hawaii

Simms you've got a dram good reason to be confused!

RAM (random access memory) is important—buy as much as you can afford. A computer uses RAM as a temporary parking place for data. RAM can feed data to your computer's processor at very high speeds (nanoseconds)—much faster than a hard disk.

DRAM (dynamic random access memory) is the most common type of RAM. It's called "dynamic" because it constantly changes, accessing information as it needs it. Look for a computer with at least 16 megabytes of DRAM (16MB RAM).

SIMMs (single inline memory modules) are an older style of RAM memory chips. **DIMM**s (dual inline memory modules) are the new, faster RAM chips. If possible, get a machine that uses DIMMs.

VRAM is short for video random access memory. Just as a computer uses memory to process instructions, so does a monitor—or more accurately, the video card to which the monitor is attached.

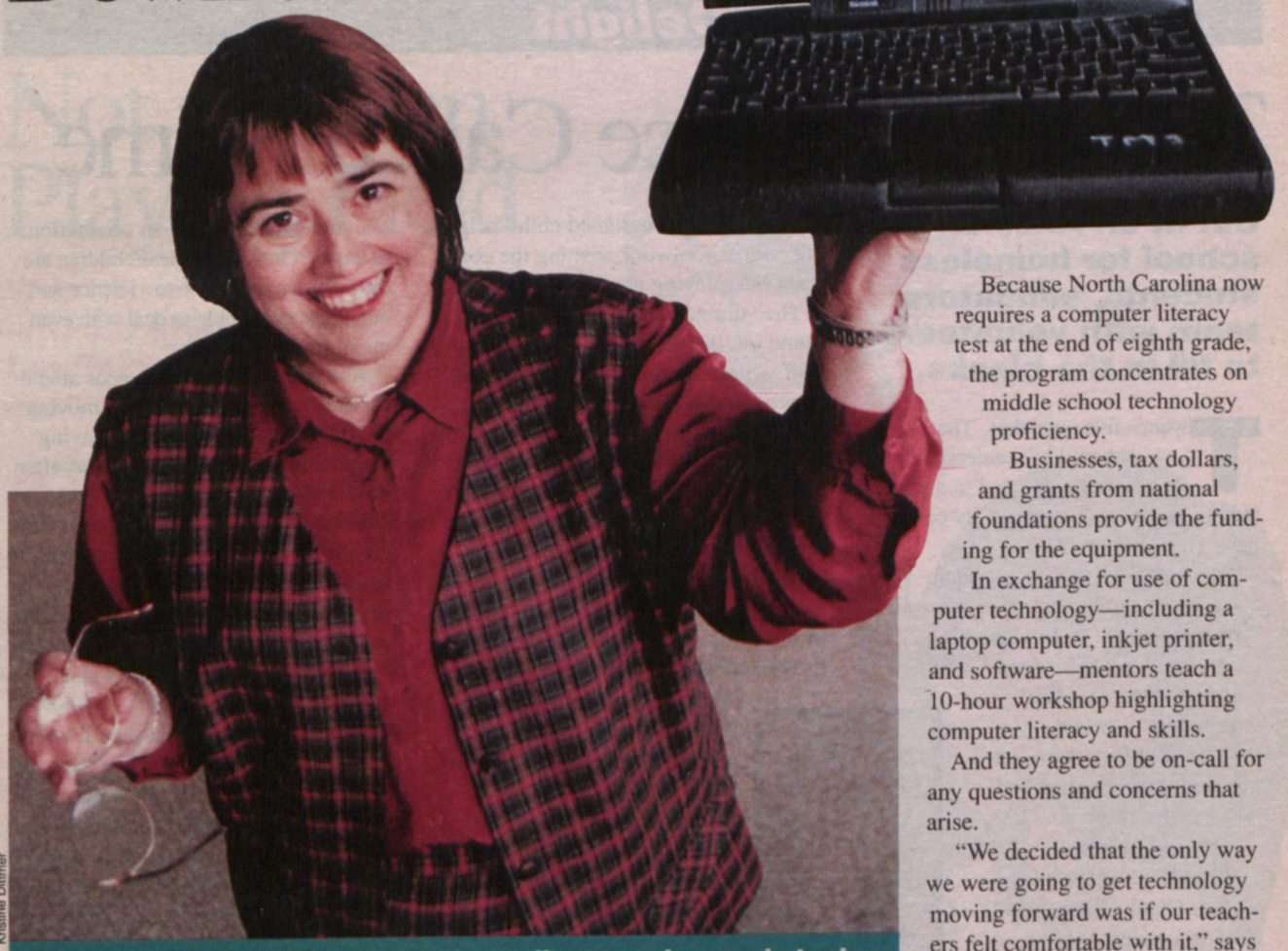
Most monitors display roughly 72 pixels per linear inch, or 5,184 pixels per square inch. For a 13-inch monitor, that's 84 square inches of space—or 435,456 pixels on the entire monitor. VRAM is responsible for calculating the specific value for each of these pixels every time the screen changes!

The computer you buy needs only enough VRAM to support the type of monitor you plan to buy with it. A general rule of thumb is to get 2MB of VRAM for a 24-bit color, 17-inch monitor. 1MB is sufficient for a 24-bit color, 13-inch monitor.

Have ideas, comments, or questions about technology? You can E-mail webeditor@dear.nea.org or write to Dear Webeditor, NEA Center for Education Technology, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Check out www.nea.org/cet for more Q&As on the Web.

Friendly User

Help Is Just Down the Hall



Kristine Dittmer

Have computer, will travel—to any colleague who needs technical advice. That's the attitude of North Carolina teacher and technology mentor Johnette Davis.

Who:
Johnette Davis, seventh grade teacher at Tyro Middle School, Davidson County, North Carolina

E-mail address:
Tyro@infoave.com

What:
To use technology, you've first got to understand it. Mentors like Davis help teachers down the hall do just that.

Inspiration:
"Serving as a technology mentor is like helping my friends. I don't feel like an instructor. I see myself in a supportive role—I'm here all the time to help those teachers who run into problems.

"I don't have the 'I'm the goddess of computers' attitude—teachers feel that I am open to questions. I am knowledgeable, but I don't have 'too much' knowledge so that people feel stupid asking me questions.

"Once, I worked with some teachers on database proficiency. After the training, a teacher asked how she could put modifications to her IEPs (Individual Education Plans) on a database. She knew that it was possible, but never knew how—and more importantly, never knew whom to ask.

"But she had no qualms about asking me questions. Now she knows how to work with IEPs and doesn't feel afraid to ask questions.

"I am encouraging the teachers to use technology as a tool. Part of my job is to make sure that helpful resources are available for teachers who need them."

Lesson:
More than 250 teachers serve as mentors for the 1,200 teachers in the Davidson County district. At least two mentors are spread throughout each of the district's 26 schools.

Because North Carolina now requires a computer literacy test at the end of eighth grade, the program concentrates on middle school technology proficiency.

Businesses, tax dollars, and grants from national foundations provide the funding for the equipment.

In exchange for use of computer technology—including a laptop computer, inkjet printer, and software—mentors teach a 10-hour workshop highlighting computer literacy and skills.

And they agree to be on-call for any questions and concerns that arise.

"We decided that the only way we were going to get technology moving forward was if our teachers felt comfortable with it," says Davidson County Schools superintendent Max Walser, who conceived the idea for the mentoring program six years ago.

"A teacher who is well versed in technology is better able to teach another teacher down the hall," says Walser. "They have a good relationship and trust each other already."

Click:
"Willingness to explore and openness to other people and different levels of knowledge—that's a lot of what makes this program successful," says Davis.

For More Information

Business Week *magazine has set up a Technology & Education moderated E-mail discussion group to connect those who need help with those who can provide it—businesses and nonprofit organizations. To subscribe, send E-mail to listserv@ftp.mcgraw-hill.com and type "subscribe tech-ed" in the message box.*

Click Here

Access Just Got Cheaper

Schools and libraries can now get telecommunications services at discounts that range from 20 percent to 90 percent off the lowest competitive rates.

That means that connecting to the Internet, for example, has just gotten cheaper.

Who do educators have to thank for this techno-largess? First, there's the inelegantly named Snowe-Rockefeller-Exon-Kerrey amendment to the 1996 Telecommunications Act, which mandated affordable telecommunications services for schools and libraries.

Then there's the Federal Communications Commission, which last spring issued a ruling implementing this act, setting the real savings into motion.

NEA's Center for Education Technology offers this background on the new "E-rate" and how educators can make sure they benefit from it.

What's the deal?

The discounts will be funded nationwide to the tune of $2.25 billion annually.

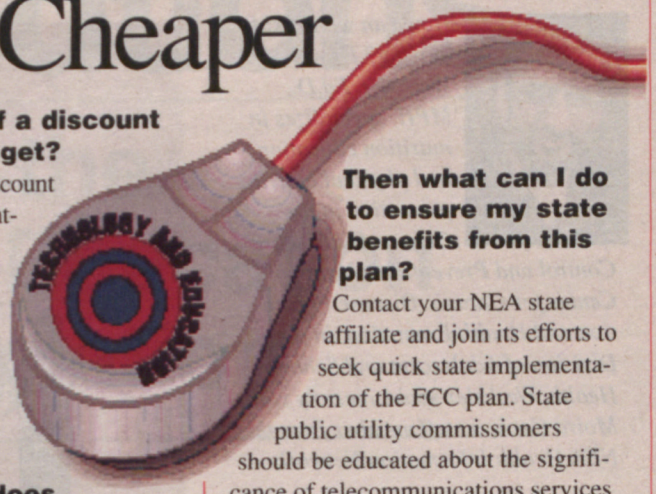
But the discounts aren't automatic.

Every state, through its public utility (or public service) commission, must adopt the FCC plan for schools and libraries to take advantage of the available funding.

The discounts are scheduled to begin on January 1, 1998.

So how much of a discount will my district get?

The amount of the discount depends on the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced school lunch—and, to a lesser degree, on whether the district is in a rural area.



What services does the E-rate cover?

The discounts include all telecommunications services, including Internet service and internal communications (wired or wireless) for telecommunications.

When can my school district apply?

Once your state has adopted the FCC plan, your district may file an application for its discounts.

In order to receive discounts, districts must prepare technology plans that include such elements as teacher preparation and integrating technology into the curriculum.

What if my state doesn't adopt the FCC plan?

A real bummer for you. States that fail to adopt the FCC plan won't be eligible for those discounts.

Then what can I do to ensure my state benefits from this plan?

Contact your NEA state affiliate and join its efforts to seek quick state implementation of the FCC plan. State public utility commissioners should be educated about the significance of telecommunications services to improving education.

Nationally, the NEA has actively been involved in the EDLiNC Coalition, a confederation of school, library, and other organizations committed to ensuring affordable telecommunications access for schools and libraries.

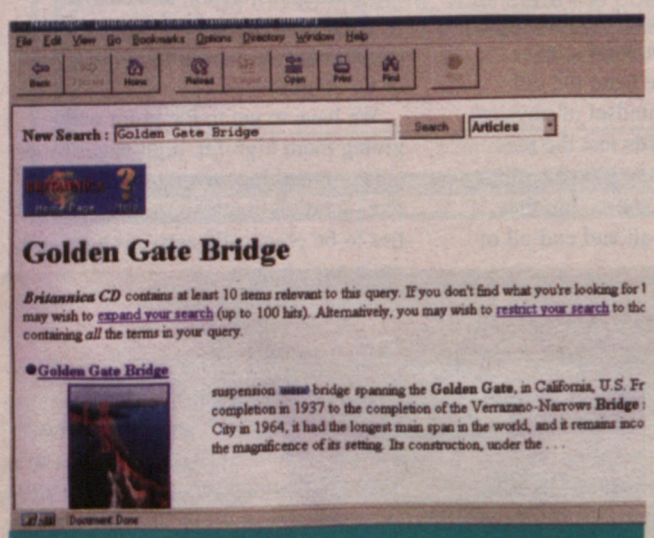
Many states have established their own EDLiNC coalitions. If one exists in your state, see how you can join in its efforts. If you do not yet have an EDLiNC coalition, your NEA state affiliate and NEA can help you form one.

If your state has adopted the FCC plan, work to ensure your district takes full advantage.

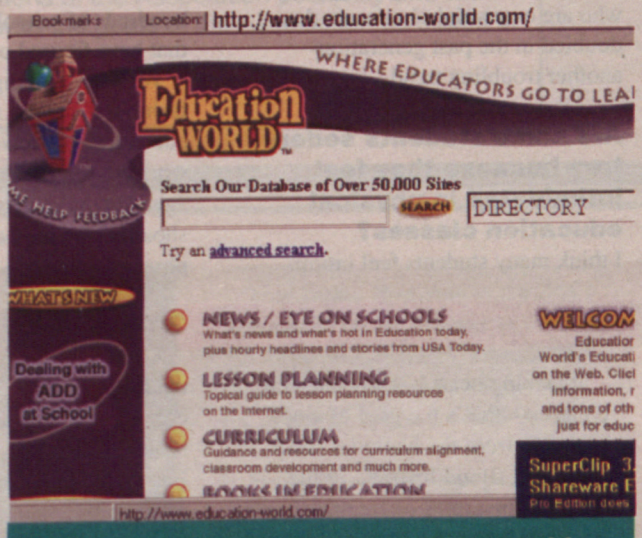
For More Information

For further information and updates on developments, check out www.itc.org/edlinc/—the EDLiNC Website.

Screen Shots


New Search : Golden Gate Bridge
Search
Articles
Golden Gate Bridge
Britannica CD contains at least 10 items relevant to this query. If you don't find what you're looking for
may wish to expand your search (up to 100 hits). Alternatively, you may wish to restrict your search to the
containing all the terms in your query.
Golden Gate Bridge
suspension bridge spanning the Golden Gate, in California, U.S. Fr
completion in 1937 to the completion of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge
City in 1964, it had the longest main span in the world, and it remains inco
the magnificence of its setting. Its construction, under the . . .

Britannica CD 97 offers the latest encyclopedic information, including more than 00 new graphics and an improved user erface. Available for Windows and Mac ($299), and in a network version.



Education World (www.education-world.com) provides a database of some 50,000 sites that can be searched by grade level—plus education news, lesson plans, and professional development resources.

New & Noteworthy

Educators Online
Simon and Schuster has launched an educational online resource, Edscape (www.edscape.com), featuring K-12 curriculum content and professional development information. Part of the site is fee-based ($65 per year), but a preview area lets you try out the site before deciding to join.

Internet Academy
Classroom Connect is holding an Internet Academy on October 15-18. Sessions include how to integrate the Internet into the classroom and how to build your own Internet skills. College credit is available. For more information, visit www.classroom.net/academy.

Swing in the CyberJungle
A treasure hunt awaits students who join the CyberSurfari. Sponsored by the Software Publishers Association, the one-month adventure starts on October 21 from a map at CyberSurfari headquarters (www.spa.org/cybersurfari/default.htm) that provides clues on finding treasures located at 100 "outposts" in the cyberspace wilderness.

Asia on Tour
AskAsia, a site launched by the Asia Society's Asian Educational Resource Center at www.askasia.org, provides information on the people and culture of Asia. In January, the site will feature the 1998 Vietnam Challenge bike trip—participants will send back pictures, news, and video clips so that students can share in the adventure.

Classroom Projects
Free teacher-written lesson plans taken from the book *Net Lessons: Web-Based Projects for Your Classroom* are available at www.ora.com/catalog/netlessons/excerpt/index.html.

Integrating the Net
Lesson plans on integrating information found on the Internet into curriculum suitable for grades K-6 can be found at www.voicenet.com/~reevesk/.

International Lessons
At www.teachers.net/lessons/, you'll find a searchable database of lesson plans from around the world and a form that lets you request specific lesson plans.

Health

From the Network

The NEA Health Information Network suggests the following helpful resources.

AIDS in the Workplace
The First National Business and Labor Conference on HIV/AIDS, sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will provide a state-of-the-art educational forum on AIDS in the workplace on September 29-30 in Washington, D.C. For more information and to register, call 800/458-5231 or check the Web at www.brta-ltra.org.

Breast Cancer
Plan ahead for October—Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The NEA HIN Campaign for Breast and Cervical Health Promotion Kit includes videos, reproducible handouts, and a how-to manual for planning cancer early-detection activities in your school community. To order, contact the NEA Health Information Network at 800/718-8387.

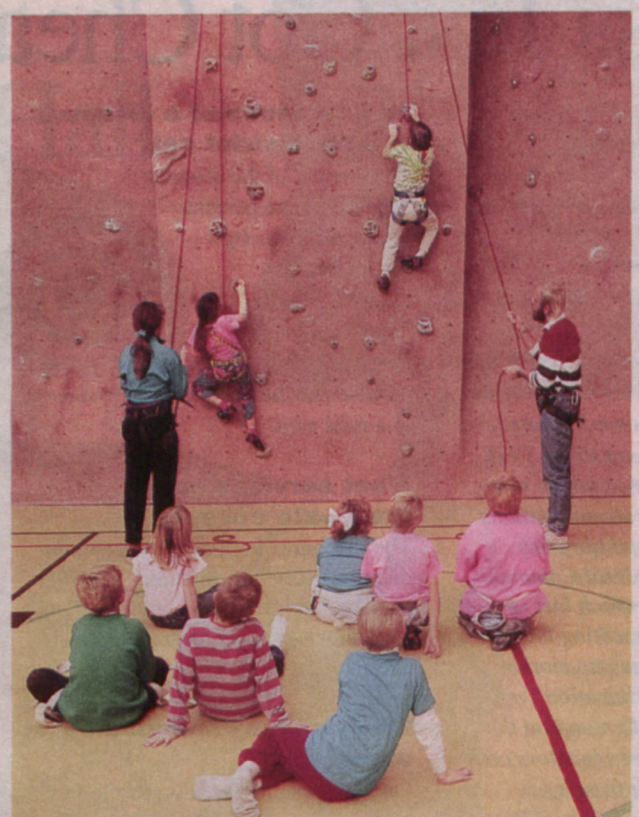
More Ways To Say No
The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has published *Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents: A Research-Based Guide.* Laid out in question-and-answer form, the guide looks at what attracts young people to drugs and spells out the most effective methods of preventing drug abuse. For free copies, call the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at 800/729-6686. For more information on this subject, visit NIDA on the Web at www.nida/nih.gov.

Radon Testing
Every home and school should be tested for radon. For information on radon and how to obtain low-cost test kits, contact the Radon Information Center at 703/356-5346 or Fax 703/356-5386.

Updated Response
An updated version of *Responding to HIV and AIDS*, now available from the NEA Health Information Network, provides background on HIV/AIDS and guidelines for school situations. For free copies, in English or Spanish, contact NEA HIN at 800/718-8387.

Let's Get Physical–Not Macho

How can we get kids moving? Howell Wechsler, Ed.D., MPH, specializes in nutrition education and physical activity promotion at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, in the Division of Adolescent and School Health. Wechsler spoke recently with Moira Cook, a staff member from the NEA Health Information Network.



Activities like wall climbing make physical education more fun and less grinding.

How much physical activity should young people get?
In the first ever surgeon general's report on physical activity and health, released last year, the big news was that young people don't have to be Olympians.

At least 30 minutes of physical activity per day is a good goal to start with. And those activities can be of moderate intensity, such as walking briskly or biking.

What are the signs that young people aren't getting enough physical activity?
The proportion of high school students taking physical education on a daily basis has dropped from 42 percent in 1991 to 25 percent in 1995.

Classes aside, the number of students who are physically active plummets between the ninth and 12th grades. We think of that drop as the beginning of the end of their active lifestyle.

Plus, the number of young people who are overweight has more than doubled in the past generation—another troubling trend.

Are some students sedentary because they feel intimidated in physical education classes?
I think many students feel intimidated, despite good intentions from physical education teachers.

But, with a new approach, we can change that. We can offer physical education classes and extracurricular programs that meet the needs of all students.

How can schools make physical education—and life-long physical activity—more appealing?
There are many fabulous programs in hundreds of schools across the country that have figured out what it takes.

We need a change from the old-fashioned, macho mindset of physical education that rewards just the kids who are good athletes. I have nothing against competitive sports, but they shouldn't be the be-all and end-all of physical activity.

There are a lot of different programs to involve students in that are fun—walking, dance, aerobics, hiking.

We need physical educators to think of themselves as facing different challenges than others did a generation ago, because kids have so many other options for their time and so many disincentives to be physically active.

Educators need to see that it is possible to reach the overwhelming majority of students so that kids can leave physical education class feeling good about themselves.

How else can NEA members guide their students toward life-long fitness?
Advocate for maintaining or reinstating physical education requirements. Support physical activity programs that serve young people who are less likely to be active. And be careful of the messages that are sent to kids.

When students do well—when they read a lot of books, help clean up the school—we often reward them with doughnuts, ice cream, and candy.

Then when kids misbehave, they're told to run four laps around the school or do 30 push-ups.

We have to get to the point where giving them high-fat, high-sugar foods is not something we do as an incentive—and giving them more opportunities to be physically active is a reward, not a punishment.

Resources

■ Teaching heart-healthy habits to children—that's the goal of a new initiative from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health. One program called CATCH—the Child and Adolescent Trial for Cardiovascular Health—provides student- and teacher-tested materials targeted to grades 3-5. Materials involving physical education, the classroom, the home, and the school cafeteria are combined as part of the largest school-based health promotion study ever. For more information and a CATCH order form, contact NHLBI Information Center, P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-1050; Fax 301/251-1223; E-mail nhlbiic@dgsys.com.

■ *Fitting Fitness In, Even When You're Pressed for Time*, the first booklet in a series produced by Shape Up America!, provides practical tips on how to fit exercise into an already crammed schedule. Included are useful illustrations of stretches and strength-building exercises that can be done even by the busy educator. To obtain a copy, specify the brochure's name and send $1 to Shape Up America!, P.O. Box 9738, Bridgeport, CT 06699.

Rights Watch

Sexual Harassment, Meet Title IX

New federal rules combat harassment—and place schools at the battlefront.

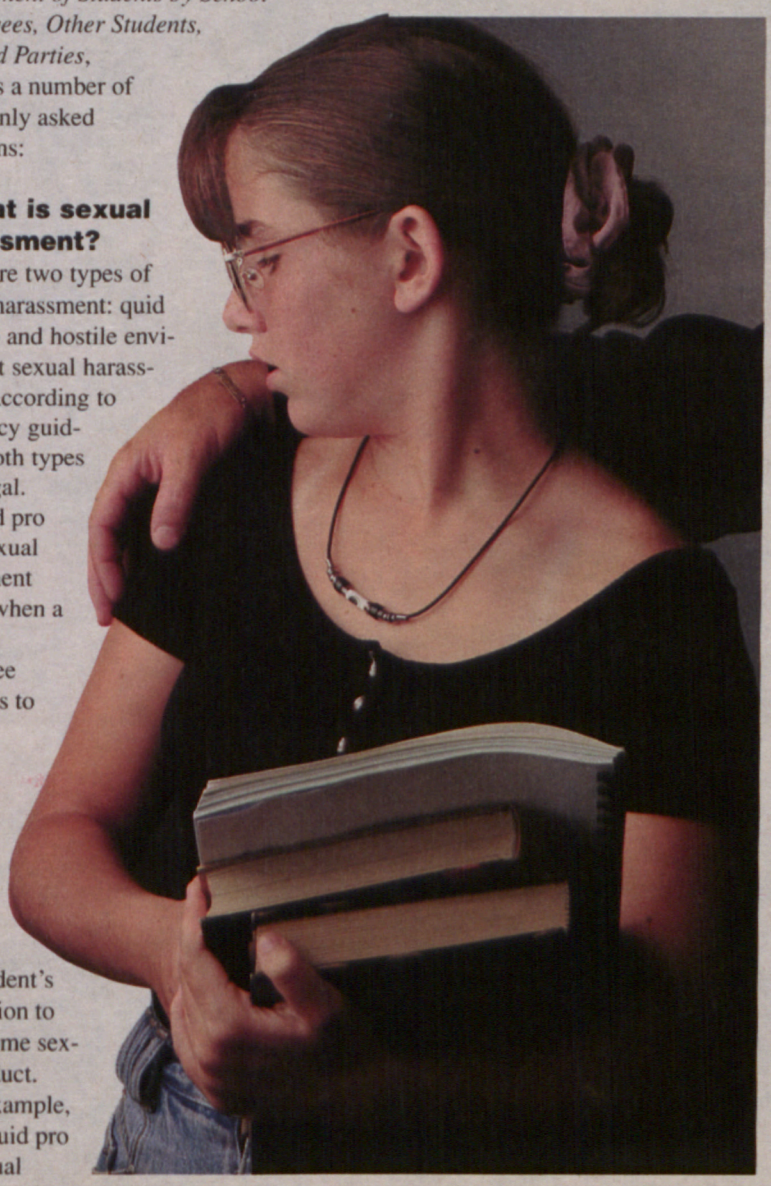
The U.S. Department of Education has announced new rules banning sexual harassment in schools.

Issued last March by the Education Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the new "policy guidance" says that sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by the federal law known as Title IX.

In a controversial move, OCR also declared that student-on-student sexual harassment is illegal and that schools have to take effective action to stop it.

The rules apply to all schools that receive federal funds—public or private, elementary through post-secondary schools.

The new 40-page policy guidance, titled *Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties*, answers a number of commonly asked questions:



■ What is sexual harassment?

There are two types of sexual harassment: quid pro quo and hostile environment sexual harassment. According to the policy guidance, both types are illegal.

"Quid pro quo" sexual harassment occurs when a school employee threatens to base an educational decision—such as a grade—on a student's submission to unwelcome sexual conduct. For example, it'd be quid pro quo sexual harassment for a teacher unfairly to give a student a *C* because the student rejected the teacher's sexual advances.

According to the *Guidance*, a "school will always be liable for even one instance of quid pro quo harassment," even if the school didn't know about the harassment.

"Hostile environment" sexual harassment occurs when a student is subjected to unwelcome sexual conduct that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it limits the student's ability to benefit from his or her education.

Generally, a hostile environment is created by a series of incidents. For example, while a single kiss or one sexually offensive comment will not by itself create a hostile environment, repeated sexually offensive comments or touching may create such an environment.

A school employee, another student, or a school visitor can create a hostile environment, according to the *Guidance*, and the school can be held liable if it "knew or should have known" about the harassment and failed to stop it.

■ Should a school have a policy against sexual harassment?

Yes, according to the *Guidance*. Title IX requires schools to have a policy against sex discrimination and a grievance procedure that provides for "prompt and equitable" handling of sex discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment.

The school's Title IX grievance procedure should be drafted in language that can be easily understood by students and should be widely disseminated.

Title IX also requires schools to have a "Title IX Coordinator" who is responsible for organizing efforts to comply with Title IX and the *Guidance*.

■ What should a school do if a student files a sexual harassment complaint or a school employee observes sexual harassment of a student?

Conduct an unbiased investigation. If a sexually hostile environment exists, the school must stop the harassment, eliminate the hostile environment, and prevent it from occurring again.

■ Is sexual harassment really a problem in schools?

Absolutely. According to *Hostile Hallways*, a 1993 survey conducted by the American Association of University Women, four out of five students report having experienced some form of sexual harassment in school.

NEA, along with several other advocacy organizations, has worked with the Office for Civil Rights for more than three years to develop this policy guidance, which also discusses topics such as academic freedom and confidentiality of complaints.

This *Sexual Harassment Guidance* is available on the Internet at www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/ocrpubs.html. An easy-to-read pamphlet summarizing the guidance is also available at that site.

In addition, NEA is preparing question-and-answer materials that explain important guidance provisions to Association members. Publication will be announced in *NEA Today* within the next few months.

—Cynthia M. Chmielewski
NEA Office of General Counsel

Resources

Sexual Assault and Harassment on Campus will be examined at a conference organized by the Safe Schools Coalition, which counts NEA as a member. Included on the packed three-day agenda are a keynote address by author Nan Stein and a presentation on "What Every Student Needs to Know about Sexual Harassment . . . and Many Schools Are Afraid To Teach Them." The conference runs from October 16-18 in Orlando, Florida. For more information, contact NEA Human and Civil Rights, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Call 202/822-7700 or E-mail tmcguthrie@nea.org.

Flirting or Hurting? A Teacher's Guide on Student-on-Student Sexual Harassment in Schools (Grades 6-12), by Nan Stein and Lisa Sjostrom, provides lessons designed to teach the meaning of sexual harassment and to encourage students to stand up to harassment in any guise—bullying, racial and ethnic intolerance, hazing, and domestic violence. 116 pp., $15.95 for NEA members ($19.95 for non-members) from the NEA Professional Library. Call 800/229-4200 to order and give stock #1864-8-10-F.

Hostile Hallways: The AAUW Survey on Sexual Harassment in America's Schools, the first national scientific study of sexual harassment in public schools, examines the experiences of 1,632 students in grades 8 through 11. Among the results: 85 percent of the girls and 76 percent of the boys surveyed experienced sexual harassment. $11.95 from the American Association of University Women. Call 800/225-9998, ext. 346, to order.

Sexual Harassment and Schools, a video produced by NEA's Teacher TV and The Learning Channel, examines how two schools with successful sexual harassment programs approach awareness and sensitivity issues with their students and school staff. Available from the NEA Professional Library for $15.95 for NEA members ($19.95 for non-members). Stock #7777-6-10-F. Call 800/229-4200 to order.

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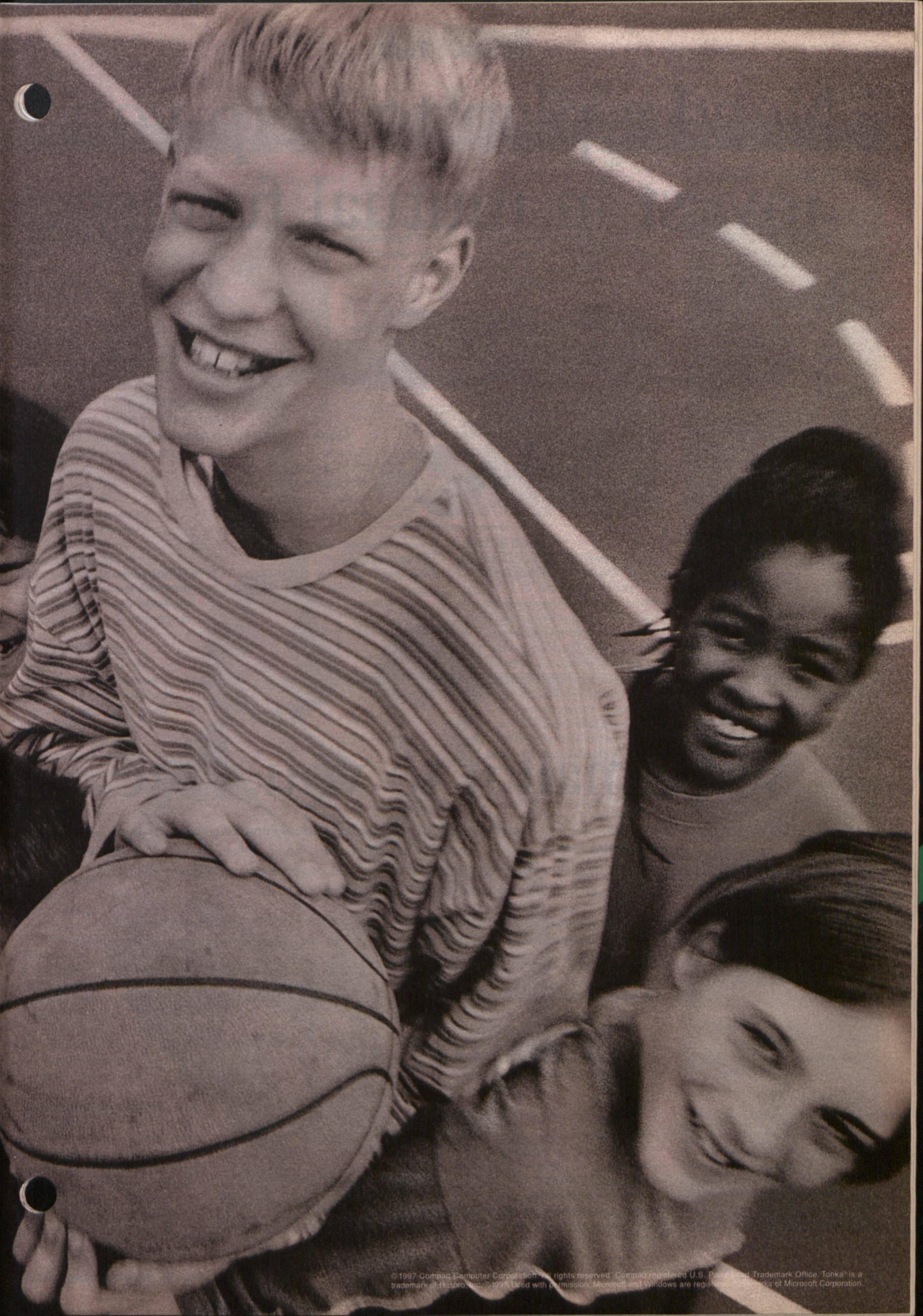

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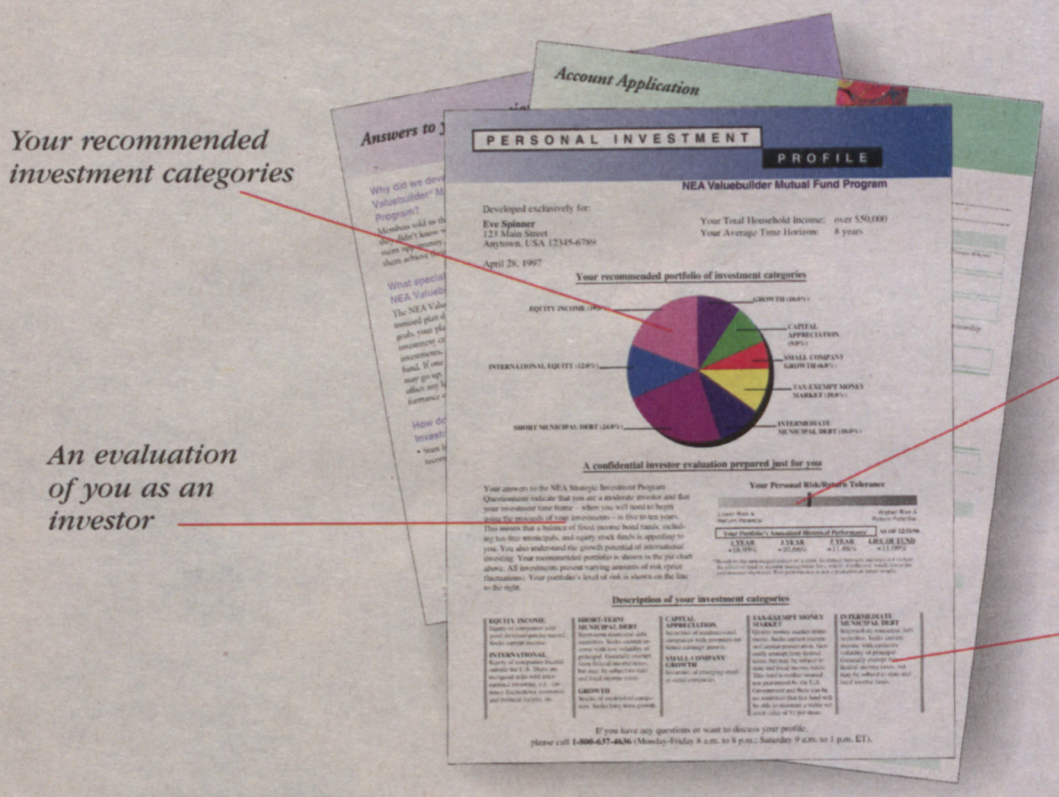
Account Application
PERSONAL INVESTMENT PROFILE
NEA Valuebuilder Mutual Fund Program
Developed exclusively for:
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123 Main Street
Anytown, USA 12345-6789
Your Total Household Income: over $50,000
Your Average Time Horizon: 8 years
April 28, 1997
Your recommended portfolio of investment categories
A confidential investor evaluation prepared just for you
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Description of your investment categories
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Your comfort level with investment risk

An evaluation of you as an investor

A description of your recommended investment categories

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Heads Up!

TV Tips

Affluenza
PBS, September, check local listings for time. This one-hour special explores the epidemic of stress, overwork, shopping, and debt. It also includes the high school play, *Barbie Get Real*, a feisty commentary on kids and consumerism.

The All New Captain Kangaroo
Syndicated, premiering September, check local listings for date and time. John McDonough—the new Captain Kangaroo—joins veteran characters Mr. Green Jeans, Grandfather Clock, and Mr. Moose for new adventures.

Disney's Recess
ABC, Saturday mornings, check local listings for date and time. This new series stars a group of fourth graders —P.J., Vince, Spinelli, Mikey, Gretchen, and Gus—as they navigate the ups and downs of elementary school life.

Mowgli: The New Adventures of *The Jungle Book*
Fox, Saturday mornings, 8:30-9 a.m. ET. This new, live-action series picks up where the classic Rudyard Kipling tale left off, following the life of a young boy raised by jungle animals.

National Geographic Explorer
PBS, September, check local listings for dates and times. This award-winning series returns as host Boyd M[illegible] leads viewers into Africa, [illegible]nd Latin America and catches National Geographic writers and photographers at work.

Ghostwriter Mysteries
CBS, Saturdays, 8-8:30 a.m. ET. Based on the popular *Ghostwriter* series, this spinoff program introduces a new cast and adds social issues to its mystery-solving agenda.

Newton's Apple
PBS, September, check local listings for date and time. As this award-winning show reaches its 15th season, join a new cast of hosts as they lead kids through the world of science.

Perfect Body
NBC, September, check local listings for date and time. Gymnast Cathy Rigby (below, left) provided technical advice and choreography for this movie about a 15-year-old whose obsession with physical perfection jeopardizes her Olympic dream and nearly kills her.

By the Book
Turner Classic Movies Channel, September 22-October 3, Monday-Thursday, 6 a.m. ET and Tuesday-Friday, 12 p.m. ET. Reading and watching movies now go hand-in-hand with this new program for middle and high school students. The first installment of this commercial-free series, *Novels to Film*, offers enrolled schools the opportunity to tape and use classic movies—along with free curriculum materials—in their classrooms. Films include *Little Women* and *Ivanhoe* (photo above). To enroll—it's free!—teachers must fax requests to Turner Learning, 770/739-7085.

Storytime
PBS, check local listings for date and time. This Emmy award-winning children's series returns for its third season with guests—Jason Alexander and Malcolm-Jamal Warner, to name a few—who introduce young readers to new and classic books.

These listings were provided by Kidsnet, a national computerized clearinghouse for children's electronic media, which can be found on the World Wide Web at www.familyeducation.com/kidsnet.asp.

school stories

Had enough of media stories about life in America's public schools? Want a peek at what's really happening inside those halls and classrooms? Check out *School Stories*, jointly produced by NEA and The Learning Channel. Here's the schedule.

Plugging Into Technology
Sunday, September 7, 12:30 p.m. ET. With the help of a federal grant, a rural South Dakota school in one of America's poorest counties goes high-tech with computers and cameras. But what's even more impressive is how a veteran teacher masters the technology and now coaches others to do the same.

The Drive To Teach
Sunday, September 14, 12:30 p.m. ET. This program features an innovative professional development plan in Louisiana that helps education support personnel who want to teach pursue their education.

Class Act: A Teacher Profile
Sunday, September 28, 12:30 p.m. ET. Spend some time with Rhode Island teacher Mary Lee Douin, who uses her singing and theatrical talent to fire up her students' passion for literature.

Better Business, Stronger Schools
***New Time Slot:** Friday, October 3, 11:30 a.m., ET. Repeating Sunday, October 5, 9 a.m. ET.* What happens when business works hand-in-hand with schools? In Wendell, North Carolina, the Siemens Corporation steps in to help build a state-of-the-art training center and launch the careers of local students.

For more information on School Stories' programs and useful hotlinks, go to the School Stories' Web site at www.nea.org/info/tv/sstories.html.

Bonus: As an added plus for NEA members, each episode of *School Stories* is available on video after airing with an additional 15 to 20 minutes of tips from the educators featured in each show. For details or to order, call 800/229-4200.

Heads Up

Free or Inexpensive

Healthy Choices
Targeted to teens, *Scholastic Health Choices* monthly magazine covers everything from pimples to asthma to teen sexuality, all in a breezy, teen style. $11.95 per year per subscription. If 10 or more subscriptions are sent to the same address, the cost would be $5.95 each. Contact Scholastic Health Choices, 2931 East McCarty St., P.O. Box 3710, Jefferson City, MO 65102-3710, 800/631-1586.

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Introducing, from NEA, some great new products and services to help you help your students learn.

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For instance, subscribe to the free **Works4Me,** and receive, every week, a practical classroom tip from another NEA member via E-mail. And it's so easy to subscribe!

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- In the "subject" line, type: **sign me up, NEA!**
- Within the message block, type ONLY: **subscribe Works4Me**
- Send the message

Want to know more? Just turn your browser to our newest Web address: **http://helpfrom.nea.org**

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Visit NEA's newest Web area at http://helpfrom.nea.org

Legal Education
In *It's the Law! A Young Person's Guide to Our Legal System,* Annette Carrel, a teacher who also serves on her county juvenile justice commission, shows readers what really happens when a law is broken. $12.95 ($16.95 for teacher's guide) plus $2 s&h for first $10, plus $.50 s&h for each additional $10. Contact Children's Small Press Collection, 719 North Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor, MI 48104, 313/668-8056.

School Funding
Concerned about school funding? *Funding for Justice: Money, Equity, and the Future of Public Education* is another excellent publication by the educators who publish *Rethinking Schools*. The book includes state-by-state listings of funding inequities. $5 plus $3.50 s&h. Contact Rethinking Schools, 1001 E. Keele Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212, 800/669-4192.

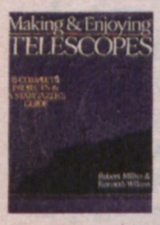
Life Gardens
The value of creating a community garden is just one of the lessons of *Takiya and Thunderheart's Life Garden*, written by J. Victor McGuire, a former junior high school teacher and university professor. A portion of the proceeds from this book go to Community Action Grants, a program for K-12 teachers created by McGuire. $16.95 plus $4 s&h. Call 888/441-5119 or go to www.spicebooks.com.

Religion in the Schools

Here's a handy guide to answer your questions about how to handle religious holidays, school prayer, and other religious issues. *Religion in the Public Schools: Guidelines for a Growing and Changing Phenomenon, K-12* offers scenarios and guidelines. $3.50 plus $3.90 s&h from the Anti-Defamation League, ADL Materials Library, 22-D Hollywood Ave., Ho-Ho-Kus, N Jersey, 07423. Check out the AD Web site at www.adl.org.

Heads Up

Home and School Science
Written for parents, teachers, and students in grades 4-10, *The Home & School Science Activity Book* provides a host of safe, interactive experiments in astronomy, chemistry, and physics. $8.50 plus $3 s&h. Contact Pigeon Press, P.O. Box 2788, Clarksville, IN 47131, 812/283-4921. On the Web, go to home.earthlink.net/~kgrizwald.



Building Telescopes
Making & Enjoying Telescopes gives instructions and a stargazer guide. $14.95 plus $3 s&h. Contact Sterling Publishing, Inc. 387 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016.

Butterfly Alphabet
Can you find your name on butterfly wings? You can using *The Butterfly Alphabet* by Kjell Sandved, a researcher and photographer who spent the last 24 years photographing letters on butterfly wings. $15.95 plus $3 s&h. Contact Butterfly Alphabet, P.O. Box 39138, Washington, DC 20016, 800/ABC-WING.

Art Educators
Art teachers who want to enhance their teaching may want to check out *Art Education in Action*, a series of five videotapes showing a variety of art activities. Each video is $15 plus $3 s&h, $65 plus $7 s&h for the set. Contact the Getty Education Institute for the Arts, 800/223-3431.

One-Computer Classrooms
What do you do with one computer and 30 students? Take a look at *Great Teaching in the One Computer Classroom* by David Dockterman. $19.95 plus $2.50 s&h. Contact Tom Snyder Productions, 80 Coolidge Hill Rd., Watertown, MA 02172-2817, 800/342-0236.

Children's Mental Health
In the video *Voices of Strength: An Inside Look at Children's Mental Health*, families share their experiences and show that children with mental health problems can and do get better. $5 (includes s&h) from the National Mental Health Services Knowledge Exchange Network, P.O. Box 42490, Washington, DC 20015, 800/789-2647. On the Web, check out www.mentalhealth.org/.

Middle School Teaching
Hints for Teaching Success in Middle Schools is part inspiration, part survival guide. Author Robert Rubenstein, a veteran middle school teacher, offers practical advice. $19 includes s&h. Call Teacher Ideas Press, 800/237-6124.

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Heads Up

Events

Gang Conference

The *Fifth Joint National Conference on Gangs, Schools, and Community* will take place September 25-27 at the Holiday Inn International Drive Resort in Orlando, Florida.

The conference will highlight dozens of successful gang prevention programs and deal with such topics as community intervention, legal issues, and the latest research on gangs.

For more information, contact Richard Verdugo, NEA HCR, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, or E-mail rverdugo@nea.org.

Sexual Harassment

The Safe Schools Coalition, which includes NEA as a member, will hold its seventh international conference on Sexual Assault and Harassment on Campus, October 16-18 in Orlando, Florida. Pre-register until September 15 for $270. The cost goes up to $320 until October 2.

For more information, contact the Safe Schools Coalition, Inc., 5351 Gulf Dr., P.O. Box 1338, Holmes Beach, FL 34218-1338. For credit card registration, call 800/537-4903.

Special Education

Experts will discuss such topics as autism, assessment systems, program evaluations, and even charter schools at a conference—*New Directions in Special Education: Preparing Today's Practitioners for Tomorrow's Schools*—to be held October 26-28 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Registration fee: $395 before September 30, $445 thereafter. Contact Traci Robinson, LRP Publications, 800/727-1227, ext. 508, or E-mail lrpconf@lrp.com.

Grants

NFIE Leadership Grants

The NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education provides public school teachers, education support personnel, and higher education faculty and staff with support to participate in activities that deepen their content knowledge and improve their teaching skills.

Professional development activities must focus on the needs of the student population and subsequently enable the participants to provide collegial leadership in their schools or institutions to improve teaching and learning.

As many as 50 grants of up to $1,000 will be awarded each year. The next deadline: October 15.

For more about NFIE, guidelines, and applications, go to www.nfie.org or contact NFIE, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 202/822-7840, Fax 202/822-7779.

Honors

Community Action

NEA members and their students have won grand prize and first prize in the Bayer/ National Science Foundation Award for Community Innovation.

Four eighth graders (photo, top right) from Sacajewea Middle S[illegible] in Spokane, Washington, coache[illegible] NEA member Virginia Ledgerwood-Kral, won $25,000 to implement their

"ring" "ring" "ring"

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plan to convert bluegrass to paper.

Other NEA members whose student teams won top awards in the competition: Ronald Schott, who coached students from Allentown, New Jersey to first prize with their school courtyard renovation project, Mimi McClure from Apopka, Florida, and Steven Lloyd from Las Vegas, Nevada.

For details on the 1997-98 competition, call 800/291-6020 or visit the Foundation's Web site at www.nsf.gov/bayer-nsf-award.htm.

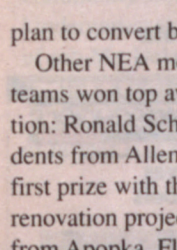
Scholastic Award

NEA member Janet Muller, a third grade teacher from Duniway Elementary School in Portland, Oregon, is the recipient of Scholastic's Ms. Frizzle Award for creative excellence in science teaching.

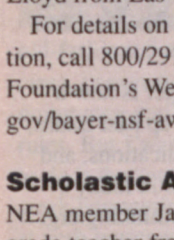
Muller received $10,000 to work with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife on "Salmon in the Sink," a plan to build a 45-gallon river tank ecosystem to raise salmon. Once raised, the fish will be released in a stream near the school.

Physical Education

Tommie Bowling



Dianne Wilson-Graham



Bane McCracken

All three National Teachers of the Year in Physical Education are NEA members. The awards are given each year by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education in recognition of outstanding teaching performance. The winners are: Thomasine (Tommie) Bowling, Merrywood Elementary School, Greenwood, South Carolina; Dianne Wilson-Graham, Sequois Intermediate School, Newbury Park, California; and Bane McCracken, Cabell Midland High School, Milton, West Virginia.

[illegible]of Fame

Two NEA members were among those inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame this year.

Alan Paul Haskvitz, a middle school social studies teacher in Walnut, California, and Dorothy Sunrise Lorentino, a retired special education teacher from Lawton, Oklahoma, were among the five inductees this summer.

For a list of current Hall of Fame members and a fact sheet about the Hall of Fame, call 800/96TEACH.

Awards

Reader's Digest Award

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difference in the lives of their students with up to 10 awards of $5,000 each, plus $10,000 for the school.

Deadline: November 1. Contact Mary Terry, Reader's Digest American Heroes in Education Award, Pleasantville, NY 10572.

Elementary Earth Science

Here's a chance to win a desktop or laptop system worth up to $3,500, $2,500 to purchase earth science materials, and a free trip to the National Science Teachers Association convention. Apply for the Barrick Goldstrike Exemplary Elementary Earth Science Teaching Award. Deadline: November 15. Contact NSTA Awards Programs, 1840 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201-3000.

Reading

The International Reading Association gives the Nila Banton Smith Award, an annual $1,000 award to a teacher or reading specialist (grade 7-12) who makes an outstanding contribution to help students become more proficient readers. Deadline: November 15. Contact the International Reading Association, P.O. Box 8139, 800 Barksdale Rd., Newark, DE 19714.

Fellowships

Fulbright Teacher Exchange

If you're interested in teaching overseas, now's the time to apply for the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program funded by the United States Information Agency. Deadline: October 15. Contact: JBL, Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program, 600 Maryland Ave., S.W., Room 140, Washington, DC 20024, 800/726-0479.

Web Winners

Votelink

Want to take a vote on Korean reunification? On Internet censorship? This interactive site lets your students vote on various issues and see the results. Check it out at www.votelink.com.

Banned Books

A great site to use when studying censorship and the First Amendment. Many of the banned books are hotlinks. There's also a link to other banned book sites. Check it out at www.banned.books.com/.

Postal Site

Kids of all ages will enjoy the U.S. Postal Service's new Web site devoted to young mailers. *Send a Message* offers a section on stamp design and stamp collecting and puts kids in contact with kids in need. Take a look at www.usps.gov/kids.

Charter Schools

Do you need information about charter schools? The U.S. Department of Education and the California State University Institute for Education Reform have set up a Web site to answer your questions. Check it out at www.uscharterschools.org.

Mental Health

The Center for Mental Health Services has a Web site full of useful information about children's mental health. Visit the Knowledge Exchange Network at www.mentalhealth.org.

Rethinking Schools

This excellent newspaper is now a Web site. You can call up past issues, take a look at past publications, and talk about equity issues in today's schools. Go to www.rethinking.org.

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In the Light Lane

Birds & Bees—and Insects?

I live in a primarily agricultural area. During a class discussion about community workers, one of my kindergarten students asked what kind of job Mr. Delaney had.

"He's a pharmacist," I replied.

"Oh," said the student. "What kind of farmer is that?"

Karen Delaney
Fullerton, Nebraska

Even 20-odd years ago, when teaching basic grammar involved old-fashioned drills and practice exercises, I never felt very successful going over and over the textbook's rules. But I was young and determined to do it the "accepted" way. I spent a week hammering away at verb tenses with my eleventh grade English remediation class.

Finally I felt brave enough to give my students a typical "choose the correct verb" test.

Imagine my amazement when one of my most frustrated students scored 96 on his test! Expressing my delight as I returned the test papers, I asked Gary if he'd done some extra studying for the test.

He just shrugged his shoulders and said very matter-of-factly, "No, ma'am. I just seen the word I always say . . . and circled the other one."

Judy Jones
Weaverville, North Carolina

One day, while I had playground duty at our middle school, the principal came outside. One of the students approached him and told him of a problem she was having with some boys.

He told her to just ignore them and they would stop bothering her. He added that he knew this answer because "I have a minor in psychology in college."

The principal then asked the student if she knew what that meant. She nodded, looked at her feet, and said quietly, "Yes—that means you weren't very [redacted] it."

Annette Davis
Canton, Ohio

My fifth grade library students had enjoyed learning about individual biographies. While introducing collective biographies, I explained that they could be about two or more people—Lewis and Clark, for example.

One attentive student kindly asked, "Don't you mean *Lois* and Clark?"

Carol Courvisier
Gilbert, Arizona

My college prep math students are allowed to write reports on mathematicians for extra credit. Eratosthenes is famous for measuring the circumference of the Earth very accurately around 200 B.C. But this year, one of my students offered a more amazing account of his accomplishment:

"Using geometries, shadows, and angles," the student wrote, "Eratosthenes discovered a revolutionary new way to increase the distance around the Earth without leaving Northern Africa."

Dianne Blocher
Felton, California

As my first graders were washing their hands for lunch, I overheard one boy say the word "sex." I had no idea in what context he used it, but there was an audible gasp from his classmates.

Deciding to take the teachable moment, I turned to my students and asked, "Did you just gasp because Willy said the word 'sex'?"

Now their eyes were as big as saucers.

So I continued. "Sex is not a bad word," I said. "In fact, we have two sexes in this room—the male sex and the female sex."

Then Rachel piped up with, "And insects!"

Laurie Freeburg
Ames, Iowa

I am a Title 1/Reading Recovery teacher—and recently I was named Teacher of the Year at my elementary school.

One of my former students saw me in the hall the day following the announcement.

"Miss Miller," he exclaimed, "I hear you're finally a teacher!"

Pam Miller
Kirkwood, Missouri

Each spring, the Stanford Achievement Test is given in our school system. We usually spend a few weeks reviewing skills in order to better prepare for the test.

Trying to motivate my third graders, I spent my entire planning time putting up banners and signs in the hall. One large sign read, "We're preparing for S.A.T."

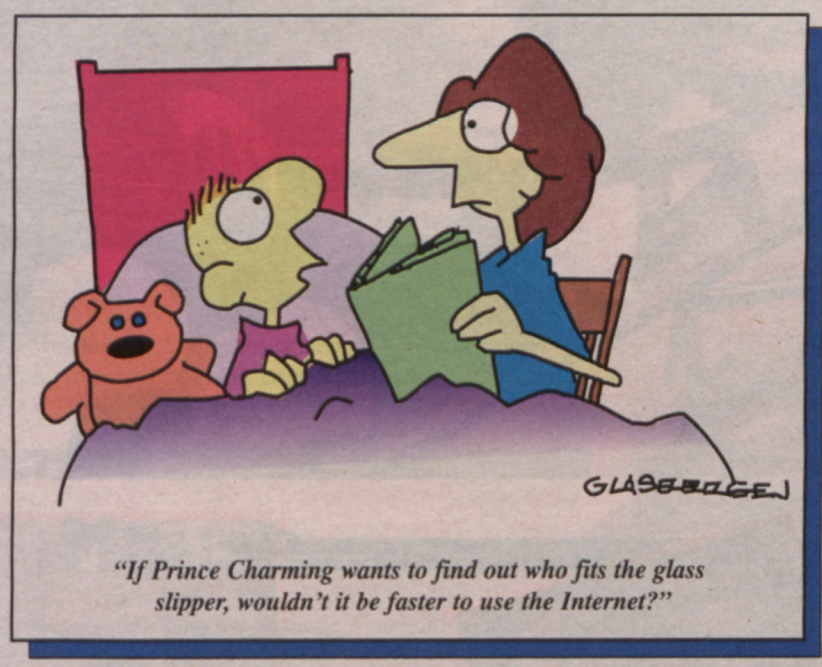
As my students returned from their P.E. class, one little boy looked up and asked, "Why are we preparing for Saturday?"

Alice Harbison
Cullman, Alabama

After displaying 12 new vocabulary words on flashcards, I asked my second grade students to supply the correct word for the sentence, "You turn a _____ to open a door."

Being exposed to English slang through his older siblings, one confident little boy raised his hand and boldly announced, "Doork-nob!"

Dianne Kintzer
Reading, Pennsylvania



"If Prince Charming wants to find out who fits the glass slipper, wouldn't it be faster to use the Internet?"

Modern Signs

In my fourth grade math class, I explained that the symbols "<" and ">" mean, respectively, "less than" and "more than."

Then, after giving several examples at the blackboard, I asked the class if anyone could explain what the symbols represented.

"That's easy," replied one eager volunteer. "The sign on the left means rewind, and the one on the right means fast forward."

Robert Papp
Peotone, Illinois

During a lesson on light sources and electricity, my students were asked to list items that give off light. At first I heard the usual responses—lamps, flashlights, traffic lights . . .

Then one student raised his hand and said, "My sneakers."

Sure enough, his sneakers had flashing lights in the heel. I'm sure the textbook authors and my own elementary school teachers wouldn't have thought of that answer 20 years ago. But in the 1990s, it could be an acceptable response.

Hope Blecher-Sass
Edison, New Jersey

I overheard a colleague and a student discussing a reading passage comparing the woolly mammoth with elephants. My colleague asked the student why he thought woolly mammoths had so much more hair than modern-day elephants.

The student thought for a while and then replied, "I guess long hair must have been in style back then."

Sandra Schwartz
South Windsor, Connecticut

Got Laughs?

Have a funny school story, anecdote, or vignette you'd like to share? You can send contributions to "In the Light Lane," *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036.
Fax: 202/822-7206
E-mail: NEAToday@aol.com

Or you can post your contribution—and read more stories—on *NEA Today*'s Web site. Just point your Web browser to **www.nea.org/neatoday** and click on "In the Light Lane."

People

Grit, Grind & **Glory**

It's 6 a.m., and the sun is rising over the Back Bay in Ventnor, New Jersey. But **Judy Gallagher** isn't up to admire the scenery. It's time for her rowing team to haul boats to the water and get ready to sweat.

Gallagher is a member of the Viking Rowing Club and, at 56, a South Jersey Regatta gold medalist.

"It's good physical and psychological conditioning," says Gallagher, a K-8 reading coordinator at the Union Avenue School. "Everyone tries to visualize what we need to do, and you have to have the right technique to move the same way. You're concentrating the entire time."

Gallagher and her three other "quad" members also focus on the barked orders from the coxswain, seated at the head of the boat. "You have to be ready to respond to what they say—'Square your oar!' or 'You're moving too fast!'

"Nobody has their hair done, there's no makeup, and when you come off the boat you have big grease spots," Gallagher observes.

But she's undeterred by the grit and grind. Before rowing, Gallagher had never pursued anything athletic. Now she gets "the rush of accomplishing something you never thought you could do."

NJ Newsphoto

Design with **Class**

Michael Corlis knows the ins and outs of some of West Virginia's most stately residences. How did this Braxton County teacher manage that?

He built them.

For 18 years, Corlis's architectural firm has produced "unique houses, ones that marry what people want to their site," says Corlis, who teaches vocational building construction at Braxton County High School.

Corlis Design and Construction, he notes, "has never built the same thing twice."

Looking at factors such as land makeup, view, wind, and solar orientation, Corlis designs magnificent dream houses. Then his crew, composed of his former students, does the construction.

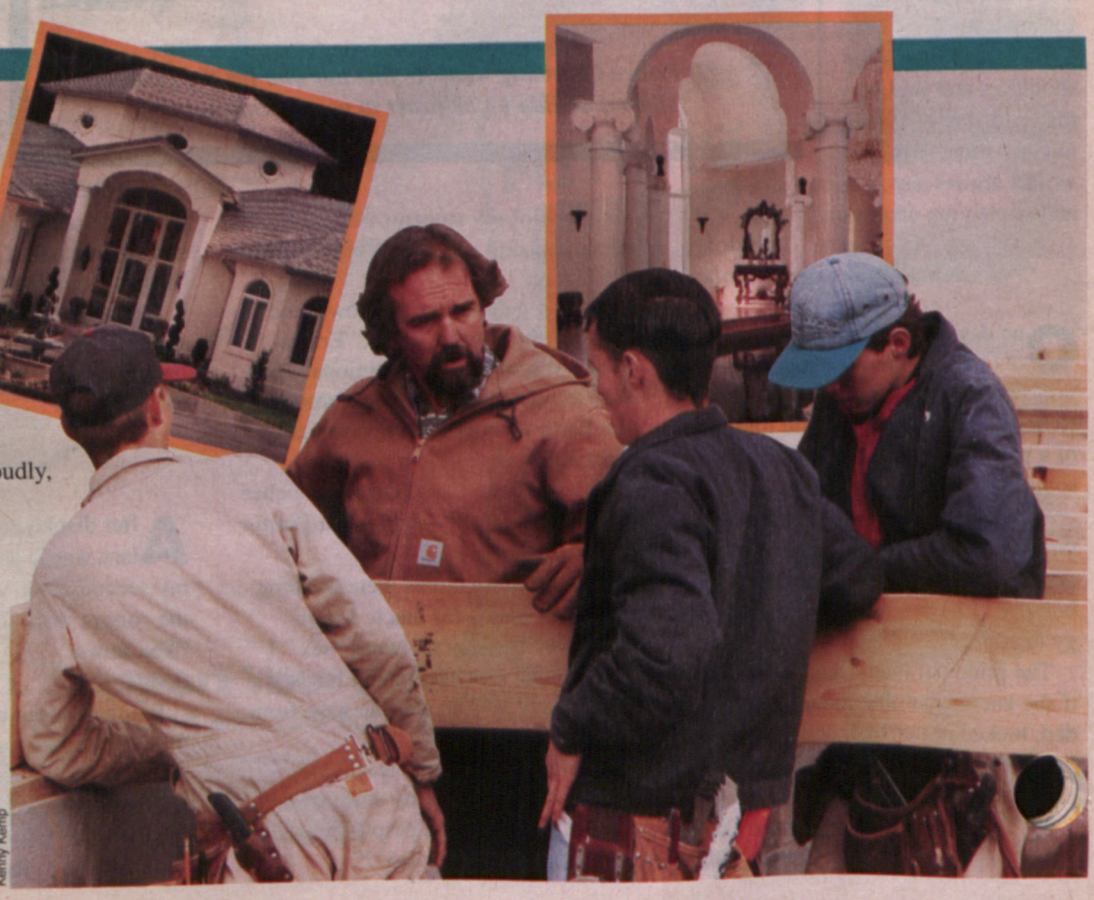
"Our guys are really great craftsmen and woodworkers," says Corlis.

"They were good when they started," he adds proudly, "and they're great now."

Corlis does have one unsatisfied client on the list: his family.

"I still haven't finished my own house," he laughs. "My wife and kids are wondering when it's ever going to be done."

Nicholas Photography



Kenny Kemp

Ellen Banner

Special Force for **Urban Kids**

Family support worker **Sapina Pele** lives in a section of Seattle most people avoid. She works with children and families for whom survival is a struggle. So it's fitting that Pele holds a seat on NEA's Emergency Commission on Urban Children.

The Commission unites NEA urban activists with some of America's most committed advocates for kids. Together they address the many problems faced in inner-city schools.

Pele, who works at Arbor Heights Elementary—doing everything from finding warm clothing for students to getting them food stamps—stresses that she lives the issues discussed by the Commission.

"As a family support worker, I'm looking at the home, the school, and things as basic as making sure kids are eating," says Pele.

"A good organizer helps to empower others," Pele adds. "If children don't have a healthy environment, it's like a dead end. I think, as a society, we often take the hope and dream out of our urban children."

Oh Boa—**Snakes!**

If students dub a teacher the "Snake Lady," is that a compliment? Science teacher **Pamela Schmidt** would say yes.

In fact, she's worked hard for the title, sharing her classroom with 30 snakes for her herpetology minicourse—called "Slithers"—at Thunder Ridge Middle School in Aurora, Colorado.

Why snakes? Exposure to the reptiles, for one, "teaches kids tolerance and respect for something that's different," says Schmidt.

Snakes have always fascinated Schmidt, who could never keep one as a pet because her mother had a phobia of them. "I always wanted what I couldn't have," she says.

Schmidt's non-poisonous snakes—which range from an eight-inch western hognose to a 13-foot Burmese python—are more than just classroom pets.

Students eagerly assume responsibilities for them, acting as caretakers during the school year and "summer sitters."

David Zalubowski

Power in the **House**

High school teacher **Richard Moore** takes his concerns about education and children's rights all the way to the state-house—and through the doors.

Last year, Moore was elected as the youngest member of the North Carolina General Assembly.

"I can offer a dose of common sense," says the 26-year-old, who teaches at A.L. [redacted] High [redacted] in Kannapolis. "And my age has been an incredible asset in politics—my energy, strength, and excitement have touched everything I do."

Kristine Dittmer

Faced with more seasoned politicos, Moore notes that his teaching experience gives him special insight on education issues. Two focal points for him are truancy in schools and the professionalization of teaching.

Moore encourages educators to make their political presence known. "Call your state legislators," he says, "and be heard."

Decisions, Decisions

Two Incomes Taken to the Max

Are you confident your family can make the best benefit package choices?

When NEA member Loriann Darrell gave birth to her son Adam, she decided to stay at home until he started kindergarten.

"Then we bought a house," says Darrell, "and it was time to go to work."

She started working four hours a day as a school administrative assistant. "My schedule has always followed Adam's," says Darrell, 34. "When he had off, I had off."

Today Adam is in high school, and Darrell works full time as a paraeducator in behavioral management in Springfield, Vermont.

Her husband, Ralph, is a roofer. And together, they do what all two-income families try to do: maximize the financial impact of their income and benefits.

The Darrells welcome the security of Loriann's paycheck. "My husband's work is seasonal," she explains. "But we know that my paychecks will keep coming in, and we'll be able to pay the bills."

Her benefits are a big advantage, too. Until three years ago, when Darrell started working full time, the family had no health insurance. When she needed major surgery five years ago, the Darrells had to pay off the $12,000 bill themselves.

Now Darrell gets medical coverage for the family as well as state pension benefits for herself.

And she's just started making contributions to a 403(b) plan. "I'm concerned about retirement because my husband doesn't have a lot of benefits," Darrell says.

Other two-income couples have two separate benefits menus to choose from. But experts note that they often don't make the best choices of these benefits, which can represent up to 30 percent of their compensation package.

For a two-income couple, here are some things to consider when looking at benefits packages:

■ Compare health plans. If you plan to use a managed care network, check to see which doctors are included in the plan. Look at deductibles, copayments, annual caps, and lifetime coverage limits.

■ Check to see if either plan offers reimbursement accounts for health care and dependent care. These plans can save you real money by allowing you to use pre-tax dollars to pay for routine health care needs, child care, or elder care.

■ Look carefully at retirement options. If both spouses have retirement plans but can't contribute the maximum to each one, contribute at least enough to capture any employer "match"—what an employer chips in to match a portion of your own contribution. If you don't, you leave this matching money on the table.

Next check for investment options. Contribute the maximum to the plan that offers the best investment choices.

—Mary Rowland

Vyto Starinskas

Vermont paraeducator Loriann Darrell knows two-income families need to look at benefits as well as pay—particularly medical benefits and retirement plans.

Coming to Terms

Before you begin to explore your employee benefits options, it helps to have an understanding of some of the basic terms:

Coordination of benefits (COB) rules determine which health care plan will be the primary one, or the first to pay, which will be secondary, and how much each plan will pay when there is more than one plan.

Copayment is the amount paid by the insured person for a benefit. In traditional medical plans, the insured person pays a portion (perhaps 20 percent of covered benefits). In managed care plans, the insured person may be asked to pay $10 or $15 as a copayment for each doctor visit.

Deductible is the portion of expenses that must be paid by the insured person before coverage begins. For example, a plan with a deductible of $250 means that you pay the first $250 of expenses.

Hybrid plan is a health care plan that combines a managed care network, where the insured person gives up some freedom of choice, with the option of going outside the plan at an additional cost. These plans are also sometimes called open-ended HMOs or point-of-service HMOs.

Indemnity plan is the traditional type of insurance coverage that "indemnifies" or reimburses you for a loss, usually after you pay a deductible and file a claim.

Many of these plans are being replaced by "managed care" plans like health maintenance organizations, where you give up some freedom of choice in exchange for lower costs.

Prescription drug plans are gaining in popularity. Prescription drugs account for about 10 percent of employee medical costs.

Because these costs are somewhat predictable, many employers offer prescription drug reimbursement plans that are separate from their medical plans.

Employees are given a drug card and a list of participating pharmacies where they can purchase prescriptions for a small copay.

Reimbursement accounts for health care and dependent care can save you real money by allowing you to use pre-tax dollars to pay for health care needs not covered by insurance, child care, or elder care.

For more information on terms, call NEA Member Benefits at 800/637-4646.

Resources

Many households depend on two incomes to make ends meet. But how many households could survive the loss of one income after the death of a spouse? NEA Member Benefits and the NEA Members Insurance Trust have designed the NEA Term Life Insurance Plan exclusively for NEA members and their families. NEA members can feel secure in knowing that their families would be cared for with decreasing term life insurance coverage from $10,000 to $300,000. Coverage is available for spouses (including domestic partners) and children as well. For more information, call 800/637-4646.

Eye on Retirement

It Pays To Get an Early Start

The importance of starting early to save for retirement can be illustrated by simple math.

Suppose you set aside $1,000 a year—about $19 a week—from age 25 to 34 in a retirement account earning 8 percent a year, and never invest another penny. At age 65, your $10,000 investment will have grown to $168,627.

But if you don't start saving until you're 35 and then invest $1,000 a year for the next 30 years—a total investment of $30,000—you'll have only $125,228 by age 65

The moral of the story: If you don't start saving in a tax-favored retirement account while you're young, you'll miss out on one of the best investment opportunities of your life.

Following are some early steps you should take to prepare for the day when your paycheck will stop.

■ **If you're 20 or more years away from retirement:** Put as much money as you can—$100 or so each month is an excellent beginning—into growth-oriented investments such as stock mutual funds. And take advantage of your employer 403(b) plan to begin building a retirement nest egg. Under the plan, you contribute a portion of your salary up to a maximum amount. That money is then invested, usually in tax-sheltered annuities.

■ **If you're 10 to 20 years away:** Now's the time to start actively building a retirement nest egg. First contact your pension administrator about your pension plan—ask how much you can expect and how the payment will be made, lump sum or annuity.

Second, determine your estimated Social Security benefits by completing a Personal Earnings and Benefit Estimate Statement. Contact your local Social Security office or call the Social Security Administration (800/772-1213), request the form, fill it out, and send it back. In about six weeks, you'll receive a report outlining what you can expect to receive at ages 62, 65, and 70.

Third, if you don't have an investment program, start one right away. You might want to consider sheltering some of your investment dollars. One option is an individual retirement account, to which you can contribute up to $2,000 a year.

Another option is a tax-deferred annuity. NEA Member Benefits offers such a plan through its Valuebuilder Annuity Program. For more information, contact Member Benefits at 800/637-4636.

Worksheet

How Much Money Do You Need for Retirement?

There's no telling *exactly* how much money you're going to need during retirement—there are too many variables. But you need a financial goal.

The following worksheet will help you determine your income goal—the amount you need to receive each year of retirement.

1. Current income multiplied by .80
(Experts suggest that you can live comfortably on 80 percent of your pre-retirement earnings.) _____

2. Years until retirement _____

3. Inflation Effect (3 or 5 percent — your best estimate of the average annual inflation rate over the years until you retire) _____

4. Multiply line 1 by the figure in the table below that represents the number of years until you retire and your estimate of the inflation rate. _____

5. Your income goal, or the amount you need to receive each year during retirement _____

Years to Retirement	3%	5%
5	1.16	1.28
10	1.34	1.63
15	1.56	2.08
20	1.81	2.65
25	2.09	3.39
30	2.43	4.32

For a 40-year-old woman earning $40,000 a year who plans to retire at age 65 and estimates inflation will run 3 percent, the calculations: $40,000 x .80 = $32,000, $32,000 x 2.09 = $66,880. (Source: *Feathering Your Nest: The Retirement Planner* by Lisa Berger, Workman Publishing.)

Educated Investor

Q. I keep reading that it's important to invest outside the United States. What's the best way to do that?

A. For most investors, the best way is to use a stock mutual fund because it provides diversification. Buying individual stocks in foreign countries is both inconvenient and risky.

You have three basic choices in mutual funds. The first is a global fund, which can invest anywhere in the world, including the U.S. When the U.S. market is hot, global fund managers tend to put a lot of assets in the U.S. where they get the best returns. For that reason, global funds don't provide much diversification.

The second choice is an international fund. International funds invest all their assets outside the U.S. So when the U.S. market does well and overseas markets do not, these funds will lag behind U.S. funds. But they provide better diversification.

The final choice is emerging markets funds. These funds invest in developing countries in places like Eastern Europe and the Pacific Rim. Many experts say that there is great growth potential in these industrializing countries. But investing in them is risky because the markets are still tiny and volatile. They make sense only for long-term investors.

Financial Finds

Calling Cards: A Rip-Off?
Prepaid calling cards can be convenient, but a growing number of users are the victims of scams. The biggest complaints: The cards don't work, or the user is charged a higher rate than advertised. *Buying Time: The Facts about Prepaid Phone Cards* offers free advice on how to select a card. Write to BBS Publications, 257 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10010. Include a self-addressed, stamped, envelope.

Buy vs. Lease
Thinking about your next car? Expert Lease from Chart Software ($69.95) is a computer program lets you to do a lease vs. buy analysis. A deluxe version includes dealers' costs, residual values, and rebate incentives. For more information, call 800/418-8450.

Hotels on the Cheap
Save up to 50 percent on city hotel rooms by making reservations through a hotel broker who books unused rooms. Brokers often specialize in particular cities, and some require payment up front. Two of the largest brokers are Hotel Reservations Network (800/964-6835) and Quikbook (800/789-9887).

Personal Planner
Financenter, on the Web at www.financenter.com, features financial calculators on everything from your home (Should I refinance?) to retirement (What will my leaving expenses be during retirement?). The site also includes advice on budgeting and purchasing stocks, bonds, and mutual funds.

Added Security
You don't have to be far away from home to have an accident. In fact, accidents can happen right in your own backyard. While you can't always prevent an accident, you can provide coverage for yourself and your family—at home and away—for just $19 a year. The NEA Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance Plan covers you, your spouse, and your children anywhere in the world, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. For more information on the NEA AD&D Insurance Plan, call NEA Member Benefits at 800/637-4636, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (or Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) ET.

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The Center is helping NEA members access the Information Superhighway with an Online Technology Education Kit, Tech Briefs, and a host of other services.

This fall, the Center will once again be co-sponsoring, with the National School Boards Association, the annual Technology + Learning Conference.

The dates: November 5-7, in Denver. Conference-goers will discover the latest in hardware and software for grades K-12 and choose among workshops and roundtables led by NEA members.

As an NEA member, you can take advantage of the special NEA conference discount—more than 50 percent off the normal registration. For conference details, check the Web at www.nea.org/cet, phone (202-822-7752), or request fax-on-demand pages (888-365-4028).

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nea
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Meet

Joe Di Dio

Jane Alexander

Promoter of the Arts

Will the National Endowment for the Arts survive?

If reason prevails, "the other NEA"—the National Endowment for the Arts—will survive, says Jane Alexander, the Endowment's chair.

For the past four years, Alexander has toured the country talking about the need for a federal commitment to arts funding—how a little bit goes a long way, how important arts education is to children, and how critical the arts are to the life of our nation's communities.

Her Washington, D.C., office is a testament to the beauty that's possible when the arts are a priority. She displays, among other things, a doll made from moss, wood prints, photographs, paintings, needlepoint—all gifts from her travels, many created by children.

Notably absent: any evidence of her career as an actress on stage, television, and film. Given the fight Alexander's waging to save her agency from extinction, that life must seem worlds away.

A day after a House subcommittee voted to eliminate the Endowment, Alexander met with NEA Today*'s Stefanie Weiss and Tammy Reiss.*

How do you respond to those who want to eliminate your agency?

I object—strenuously. It's simply unwise on the part of some legislators to think that art is not an appropriate area for federal funding. Like education, art addresses so much of who we are as human beings—the intellect, the soul, the spirit.

Last year, Congress voted to cut our funding nearly in half. The cut that we've sustained is hurting our ability to fund worthy projects and reach more Americans—all because federal arts funding has become a partisan issue.

What's so partisan about the arts?

You've got me. The National Endowment for the Arts was founded 32 years ago with substantial bipartisan support and, under President Nixon, increased its budget eightfold. Most of the board members of large arts organizations are Republicans. And yet it's become a political football. It shouldn't be—the arts are for everyone.

What does the Endowment do to reach "everyone"?

Our mission is twofold—first, to foster excellence, diversity, and vitality in the arts, and second, to expand public access and appreciation of the arts.

So we serve communities everywhere in all kinds of ways. We help to fund arts festivals, artists in the schools, media coverage of the arts, touring exhibits, arts that can be seen on television, and so much more.

What do you say to people who say we can't afford federal funding for the arts?

Do we really need so many B-2 bombers? One Trident submarine would fund the Endowment for more than a hundred years.

Our budget is $99.5 million. In terms of the federal budget, that's a very, very small sum—and we do a lot with a little. We should be able to have submarines *and* the arts, too.

What about those who say federal funds shouldn't pay for "controversial" art?

They're focused on sensationalized things that happened years ago.

The fact is you're not going to please all the people all the time with art. A lot of it is in the eye of the beholder, and some new art is very, very difficult.

But we do our best at the Endowment to fund the very best—and I think our record speaks for itself. In 32 years, we've made about 112,000 grants, and only about 40 of them have caused people some problems. That's a tiny percentage of problematic recipients.

How do you feel about school districts cutting art budgets?

It seems arts programs are always the first to go. I think it's shortsighted. I want arts education for all children.

All children from an early age need arts in their lives so—as researchers have pointed out—their brains can develop fully, and they can learn to express themselves. In addition, there's a lot that art can teach students about history, math, science, communication, and physical conditioning.

What are you doing to foster arts education in the schools?

As much as we possibly can with the money we have.

We fund artists-in-residence programs that bring students in contact with visual artists, musicians, dancers, and writers. We help develop and implement arts curriculum in schools. And we fund programs that encourage multicultural arts experiences.

Teacher training is a key part of what we do—leadership in the classroom is crucial to the quality of arts education.

How can teachers and artists work better together?

They can train together. If artists are going to go into the schools, they've got to learn how to teach. And some teachers need help learning to teach the arts.

We call teachers and artists together the dynamic duo—it's a real winning team. We fund many projects that bring them together. For example, with a small grant from the Endowment, the Milwaukee symphony orchestra provides in-service training to teachers on integrating music into their curriculum.

What can our members do to help save the Endowment?

They can tell parents, other educators, superintendents, legislators at the local, federal, and state levels—you name it—what the arts mean to them and to the children they teach.

Will you return to acting at some point?

I do miss performing. But the wonderful thing about the theater is you can always come back to it. I can do it until I pass over to the next world. And I have colleagues, like Jessica Tandy, who worked right up until a couple of months before she died.

For More Information

- Check out the National Endowment for the Arts' Web site at www.arts.endow.gov.
- Go to ARTSEDGE, a national online arts education network based at the Kennedy Center, at http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org.
- For the following free publications, call the National Endowment for the Arts at 202/682-5400. Supplies are limited.
  - *Eloquent Evidence: Arts at the Core of Learning*, a listing of the latest research proving a link between the arts and academic success.
  - *The Arts and Education: Partners in Achieving Our National Education Goals*, an explanation of the Goals 2000 arts education project.
  - *Imagine: Introducing Your Ch[illegible] the Arts*, a booklet for parents want ideas for boosting the arts at home.

Debate

Is Environmental Education Scaring Our Kids to Death?

Wayne Arnst

Yes

Don Hungerford has taught for 28 years in the Great Falls, Montana, school district. He currently teaches biology at C.M. Russell High School and is a member of the Great Falls Education Association. During the summers, Hungerford works for the Forest Service in civil engineering.

For too long, environmental politics have been a better predictor of what's happening in science class than environmental facts.

While this unfortunate trend in the curriculum may not literally be "scaring our kids to death," it is instilling in them unfounded fears about the state of the world they will someday inherit.

Perhaps more damaging, the environmental curriculum is, in some cases, replacing the teaching of scientific methods with practical instructions on how to become an effective political lobbyist.

Some may call this a form of "teaching science across the curriculum." I call it dangerous. It guts what's most important in any science class—teaching students to bring a scientific approach to the study of everything around them.

I teach second-year biology to 130 juniors and seniors. It's been interesting and not a little disheartening to see students come into the classroom with strongly held, preconceived notions about environmental issues.

Based on the one-sided presentations they've received, many of my students see man as a villain in nature, and industry as the speed racer driving us to extinction.

In a recent discussion about a ballot issue involving mining wastes and water quality, I encouraged my students to look at both sides.

One 18-year-old, voting for the first time, said, "All mining should be stopped. That would eliminate the problem."

"What about the people who make a living at the mine" asked another student. "One of them could be your father."

"If he worked in such a business," the last student replied, "he would deserve to lose his job." Sadly, I find this attitude quite typical.

I'm not alone in my concern about the current state of affairs. Michael Sanera and Jane Shaw have written a new, well-balanced book about environmental education. *Facts Not Fear* examines environmental curriculum and offers well-referenced research and comprehensive textbook reviews.

The graphs and charts are easy to read and understand and are a good supplement to the text. (For an online excerpt, go to www.perc.org.)

Sanera and Shaw encourage sound decision making based on facts from many different sources—and teachers should approach environmental education in the classroom in the same way.

While there's certainly a place in school for encouraging responsible involvement in the political and policy issues of the day—including environmental ones—this should not replace our attention to the rigorous methods of science.

In a field as politically charged and yet as important as the protection of the environment, we must approach the facts scientifically. A fear-driven approach to environmental issues works as poorly in the classroom as it would in the actual management of our natural environment.

We must guard against allowing fear of environmental problems to grow unchecked in our students. Instead, we must help our students develop the hard-won confidence inspired by a command of the facts. True solutions grow from this confidence.

And such is the progress of science.

No

Barbara Lewis teaches grades 4-6 at Jackson Elementary in Salt Lake City, Utah. She's also a consultant and author of several books, including* The Kid's Guide to Social Action, The Kid's Guide to Service Projects, *and* What Do You Stand For: The Kid's Guide to Building Character *(800/735-READ).

Some say that "children need to be preserved just as much as the environment." They imply that kids who study the environment will turn into worry warts who will lose their appetites, cease to enjoy watching clouds, and stop making garlands out of flowers.

Not true. Just ask the kids.

In 1994, the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation commissioned a survey of more than 2,000 students nationwide to find out their attitudes about the environment.

Less than half of those surveyed even listed the environment as something to worry about. The rest said they worry more about AIDS, guns, and kidnapping.

Reports from the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education and Washington State University found that students aren't overwhelmed with tales of pollution and toxic waste. They think environmental problems can be solved—and that they can help.

In fact, the students who took action to protect the environment had higher feelings of self-esteem and control over their lives.

In my own class, I've seen at-risk children grow in self-esteem, self-discipline, critical thinking, and leadership skills by cleaning up hazardous waste and planting trees.

Plus, they learn to care. When several of the trees my students planted died, they went back on their own to replant new trees. As Aaron told me, "I've named my trees Dan and Little Ann, and I'm going to bring my own kids back to meet them."

So why the backlash against environmental education? Some say teachers sometimes distort facts and give unbalanced information about environmental issues. But that can be true in any area of the curriculum. It's hardly an indication that environmental education should be stopped or that it's frightening children.

Sure, there are some bad materials out there on environmental education. But instead of dumping on the topic, qualified scientists and educators should evaluate existing materials—and weed out the ones that are giving environmental education a black eye.

Subject matter standards would help, too—and they're on the way. The North American Association for Environmental Education is working with the EPA to create new standards for teaching about ecological issues.

The most dangerous aspect of the backlash against environmental education is the accompanying attack on advocacy rights—rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

When second graders in Tucson wrote letters protesting development near their school, they launched a controversy that eliminated environmental education in the state. Further west in Washington State, a principal of an environmental magnet school issued a strict no-advocacy policy to keep controversy down.

We need to encourage advocacy skills—not squash them. When students advocate, they look for solutions, express their opinions, and develop critical thinking skills.

The nation needs youth with problem-solving abilities in environmental issues. If this ability is squelched until they're 18, most young people will be apathetic or intimidated by then, and the ripe fruit of citizen involvement will be largely lost.

What's Your Opinion?

Is environmental education scaring our kids to death?

To vote, visit our Web site at **www.nea.org/neatoday** and see the results instantly.

Should morals be taught in the classroom?

The tally on this Debate question from the last issue of *NEA Today*:
96% Yes **4% No**

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Publications

BUTTERFLY ALPHABET

Poster. See May issue. Signed $12.95, extra signed $2.95. S&H $3.95. Wholesale, $1.95 ea. min. 20, POB 39138, Washington, DC 20016. (800)ABC-WING.

K-3 Bilingual Thematic Units. Free catalog. DDK Publications, Box 60665, Bakersfield, CA 93386-0665. (805) 872-4DDK

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See the information box in the lower right hand corner of this page for details.

Conferences

FIFTH JOINT NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GANGS, SCHOOL, & COMMUNITY

On September 25-27, 1997, learn how to keep gangs and violence out of your school and community. Attend the annual conference that is cosponsored by the Safe Schools Coalition and NEA and that is reputed to be one of the best in this field.

NEA members may request information on the conference and preconference workshops by contacting Dr. Richard Verdugo at NEA Human & Civil Rights, 1201 16th St., NW, Washington DC 20036-3290 or Ms. Daisy Bennett at 202/822-7727; fax: 202/822-7578.

The conference will be held in Orlando, Florida. Come, join your colleagues, and share information with law enforcement, community, student, and crisis workers. Help make your schools and community safer places.

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Books

Taking Flak? Talk Back!

Don't let your rotten brother-in-law ruin yet another meal with his attacks on public schools.

Setting the Record Straight
Gerald W. Bracey. *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 216 pp., $20.95, 703/549-9110, 800/933-ASCD.*

Bet you never imagined that a book could save your dinner parties, come to your rescue on an airplane, and help you give your rotten brother-in-law what he deserves.

Well, this book can. Gerald Bracey's *Setting the Record Straight: Responses to Misconceptions About Public Education in the United States* takes on 18 of the most common criticisms of public schools—and provides answers with attitude.

Each chapter begins with a popular misconception, explains where it originated or why it persists, then provides both brief (get rid of 'em quick) and lengthy (bore them with the research) retorts.

A few examples:

If your neighbor says, "Private schools get better results than public schools," Bracey suggests that you say, "The differences between results in public and private schools are small, given the advantages of the private schools, except—where there aren't any differences."

If your seat-mate on a transcontinental flight says, "Our kids look awful compared with Asian or European kids," Bracey gives you 25 pages of research to draw on and suggests you start with these three words, "Not at all."

If your brother-in-law says, "Schools aren't preparing students for work," Bracey suggests you say, "Schools shouldn't prepare students for work," or, if that doesn't work, "The U.S. worker is the most productive in the world, so what's the beef?"

Bracey's work is both well-researched and glib. He points fingers at those spreading lies—be they William Bennett or the National Science Foundation—dismisses some arguments outright, and doesn't hesitate to quote himself.

Some call Bracey and others who defend the state of public education status quo-ers. Bracey takes them on directly in his last paragraph:

"The high school graduation rate in the United States has swelled from 3 percent a century ago to 83 percent now. . . . We cannot rest on any laurels, but we can be proud of that record even as we seek to improve it."

NEA Professional Library Top 10 Bestseller List

1 Pitfalls and Potholes: A Checklist for Avoiding Common Mistakes of Beginning Teachers. Barbara A. Murray and Kenneth T. Murray. ($4.50) The second title in the Checklist Series offers practical advice to new teachers. (#2151-7-10-FB)

2 Technology for Diverse Learners. NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) When it comes to ESL and at-risk students, these teachers discovered that computers and video technology succeed where other strategies fall short. (#2908-9-10-FB)

3 Multiple Intelligences. NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) Find out how your colleagues are adapting their teaching strategies to take advantage of the seven intelligences. (#2910-0-10-FB)

4 Countdown to the First Day of School. Leo M. Schell & Paul Burden. ($4.50) A "must-have" checklist for every beginning elementary school teacher. (#2150-9-10-FB)

5 Moving to the Block: Getting Ready to Teach in Extended Periods of Time. Fleming, Olenn, Schoenstein, and Eineder. ($4.50) The ultimate block scheduling checklist, this compact book answers your questions on how, why, and when you should consider moving from a traditional schedule to a block schedule. (#2159-2-10-FB)

6 Portfolio Practices: Thinking Through the Assessment of Children's Work. Steve Seidel, et al. ($14.95) Learn the "nuts and bolts" of student portfolios and discover fresh ways to think about assessment. (#1858-3-10-FB)

7 Integrated Thematic Teaching. NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) Six stories from teachers who successfully interweave disciplines into a tapestry that makes the curriculum come alive. (#2909-7-10-FB)

8 Inspiring Quality in Your School. Robert A. Sullo. ($14.95) This book shows why *you* are the most important person to inspire quality in your school. (#2951-8-10-FB)

9 Bullyproof: A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Fourth and Fifth Grade Students. Nan Stein and Lisa Sjostrom. ($15.95) "Bullyproof" your classroom with these teacher-tested lessons. (#1873-7-10-FB)

10 Teaching and the Art of Successful Classroom Management, 2nd edition. Harvey Kraut. ($14.95) A must-read for first-year high school teachers. (#2004-9-10-FB)

This month's rankings show the NEA Professional Library bestsellers at the 1997 Representative Assembly in Atlanta. All the books listed above are published by the NEA Professional Library, a service for NEA members financed solely by the sale of books and other professional development materials to the education community.

How To Order

To order any NEA Professional Library bestseller—or to receive a free catalog of Professional Library titles—call

800/229-4200

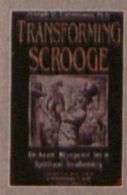
The prices listed are NEA member prices. A shipping/handling charge will be added to each order.

Books by NEA Members

The Broken Blade
William Durbin. *Delacorte Press, 160 pp., $14.95, 800/323-9872.* Set in 1800, this novel for kids 10 and up follows a young French Canadian boy, who joins fur traders on a 2,400-mile river journey.

Nah! Nah! Nah!
Richard L. Biren. *MAR*CO Products, Inc., 72 pp., $12.95 plus $4.50 s&h, 800/448-2197.* "A comprehensive teasing-education manual" for kids in grades 3-5, this book provides 18 different strategies for dealing with teasing. Includes lesson plans.

I Didn't Know It Was Mine
Arnold Erickson. *Sampo Publishing, 302 pp., $15 plus $3 s&h to Creative Well, Box 2121, Ashtabula, Ohio 44004.* A memoir by a World War II pilot and a pioneering NEA staffer about his adventures both flying and organizing.

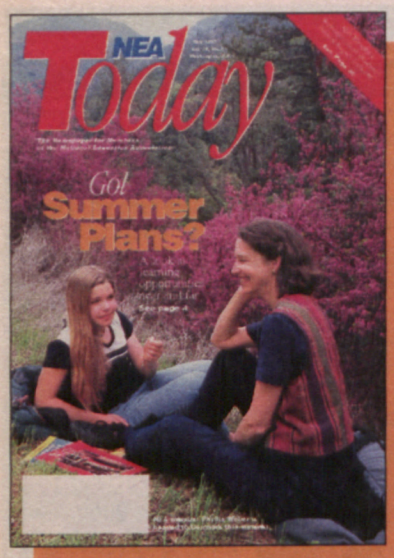


Transforming Scrooge
Joseph D. Cusumano. *Llewellyn Publications, 312 pp., $14 for NEA members, 800/843-6666.* Written by a teacher and therapist, this book follows Scrooge's spiritual journey from cold-hearted miser to warm-hearted man—and explains how you can make the same transformation.

Life's Little Financial Instruction Book
Joseph Bisignano. *Pelican Publishing, 96 pp., $7.95 (discounts for school use and quantity orders), 800/843-1724.* Advice from a seasoned business education teacher on "how to make smarter choices in managing the money you earn."

Calling all authors: Send your book—along with ordering information and your place of employment—to: NEA Today Books, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Letters



Summer Plans

I quite enjoyed your articles on teachers' summer plans (Cover story, May). I agree with the teacher who used her trip to teach students about another culture.

Another way to help students understand today's world is to participate in your community's youth study exchange program. In the past, I've had students from France, Panama, Mexico, Argentina, and Thailand in my classroom. I even teach a unit on Thailand—ever since a Thai student stayed in my home and left a lasting legacy.

Lyna Kittelmann
Payette, Idaho

For many of us, summer is just another three months of work. There's no extra money available for vacations, adventures to foreign lands, and educational opportunities.

Articles like yours fuel the public's attitude that teachers get three months of vacation. This type of publicity does little to help make teaching become a respected or professionally paid career.

Valerie Starr
Anaheim, California

Operation Rescue

Instead of giving Operation Rescue a zero for its education campaign in front of high schools (Heroes & Zeroes, May), you should applaud its efforts to save future students. The children killed every year by abortions will never grow up and be able to attend school. They will never be able to reach their potential.

Greg Distel
Tiffin, Ohio

Your argument against Operation Rescue's campaign—"Just cause they have the right doesn't make it right"—can work both ways. Just because women have the right to get an abortion doesn't make it right. Don't we call education a full spectrum of knowledge?

Kathie Steele
Anchorage, Alaska

What About the Dads?

I was dismayed to read your blurb "Home Alone" (Bottom Line, May). It implies that it's the mother's fault and responsibility that children are home alone. What about the fathers?

It scares me when magazines aimed at educators provide such sexist commentary and blame women for joining the workforce. Shame on you.

I.S. Dillon
Seldovia, Alaska

Whose Problem?

Give yourselves a zero for the wording on your article on inclusion: "Small Solutions to a Big Problem" (Cover story, April).

It's difficult enough for those of us working toward inclusive classrooms without our union's own paper framing the concept as a "big problem." Perhaps "challenge" would have been a better choice.

Your word choice shows how far we have to go to meet the challenges described in the article. Treating all students with the dignity they deserve would be a fine place to start.

Martin Myers
North Hollywood, California

Kicking Back in ESL

As a teacher of ESL and bilingual classes, I zoned in on the question: "Is the segregation of ESL students discrimination?" (Debate, April).

While some students benefit from courses taught in their native language, other students are held back by continually being placed in ESL—even though they were born here and have been in ESL and bilingual classes for five years or more.

Most students want to learn English, but when they're given a chance to stay in low-level classes where they don't have to work hard, they—like most normal people—will choose to kick back and merely occupy a seat.

Gerald Lunderville
Long Beach, California

Enough Sad Endings

I disagree with philanthropist Edward Davidson, who says all teachers should read Stacy Bess's book *Nobody Don't Love Nobody* (Books, April). Teachers don't need to read it—teachers live this book every day, write it every evening, and dream it every night.

These days, a child who isn't from an abusive situation is the exception. A child who has both original parents, hasn't been abused, exposed to drugs at home, or visited dad in jail—now, that's the rare child.

The people who do need to read the book are businessmen like Davidson, parents, school board members, administrators, and those who think teachers are overvalued.

I have enough sad endings to deal with. I don't need to borrow any from Stacy Bess.

Emily Bennett
Pocatello, Idaho

Homework on the Brain

I was thrilled to see the article "The Latest on How the Brain Works," (Inside Scoop, April). Those who are investing time and energy in school and curriculum restructuring would do well to delve into the latest information from neuroscience. There are guideposts here that shouldn't be ignored. The public that we serve will be asking questions, and we will be expected to have answers.

Jack Stone
Roseburg, Oregon
jvstone@teleport.com

Stuck in the Web

I didn't know whether to laugh or cry when I saw the quote from a teacher who knew she had a problem when "Netscape went down," ruining her lesson plan (April, Students & Strategies).

"Netscape" is not the Internet. So unless you're speaking of Netscape Communication Corporation's server or Web site, you wouldn't refer to Netscape "being down."

Netscape Navigator is a software program called a "Web browser," which allows the user to access one particular part of the Internet called the "World Wide Web."

Thanks for allowing me to vent on this subject. It is indeed a pet peeve of mine.

William Bennett
Lewes, Delaware

Creativity Unleashed

If the new teacher who was "embarrassed by the black cats her kindergartners made" (In the Light Lane, April) took a course in child development or art, she would discover that "embarrassment" has no place in children's art.

Too many children are pushed into making objects instead of experiencing the texture and feeling of creating. Art then becomes instruction and production rather than appreciation and process.

Art is developmental—for all of us. That's one of the many beauties of art—and childhood.

Susan Belany
Morro Bay, California

Hoop Dreams

A brief item on the scarcity of athletic scholarships (Bottom Line, April) implies that only Division I colleges award a scholarships.

My son, who went to a Division II school on a full athletic scholar-

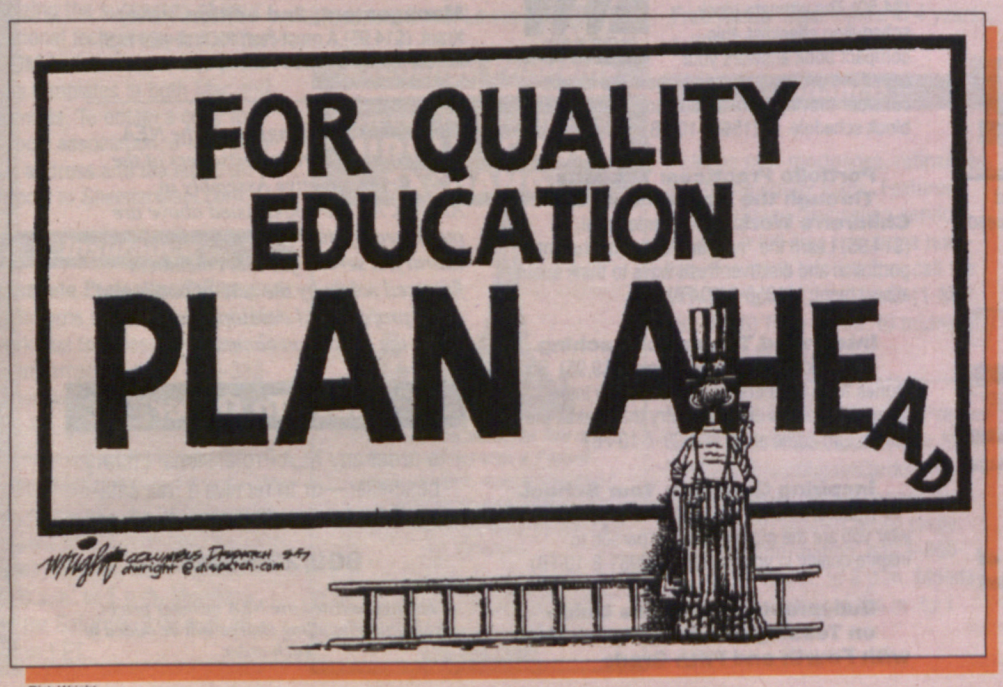
Reader on Reid

As a whole language teacher, I turned quickly to "How Kids Learn To Read," (Innovators, May). I was dismayed with the small space given to such a big topic, the unattributed statistics, the contradictions within the piece, and the items that researcher Reid Lyons got wrong.

Allow me two corrections: First, any teacher of emergent readers observes children reading before they are able to recognize alphabet sounds.

Second, contrary to popular opinion, whole language teachers do incorporate phonics instruction. All reading cues must be modeled and taught explicitly, where appropriate.

Melanie Childress
Nashville, Tennessee



Dick Wright

A Letter from: Grand Forks, North Dakota

After the Flood, a Community Begins Again

On April 18, the life of every NEA member in the Grand Forks area changed permanently.

On that fateful Friday, thousands of sandbaggers were warned away from the dikes as sirens wailed, helicopters hovered, and water began pouring over and through the town's protective system of levees.

In 48 hours, the city evacuated 55,000 people, including more than 800 NEA members. The Grand Forks Air Force base, 13 miles west of town, became a temporary home for more than 5,000 of the evacuees. Many more had to travel hundreds of miles to relocate.

An emergency Operations Center was established on a small undamaged portion of the University of North Dakota. From there, volunteers, including local Association members, worked with city officials and national guardsmen to restore water, sewer, and power to the city.

Days later, a fire destroyed 11 downtown buildings.

The disaster, now one of the worst in U.S. history, has had a profound effect on our schools, our students, and our staff.

The district has sustained $45 million in damage to its 20 buildings. Fifteen suffered major damage—of those, four will not open this fall.

We lost six libraries, six food service operations, 36 boilers, 400 computers, and more than 100 classrooms. Association members lost several million dollars of personal property in those classrooms.

The University of North Dakota suffered another $43 million in damages. Six dorms, two cafeterias, the student union, many classroom buildings, and the medical school are heavily damaged. Repairing the entire campus-wide heating system alone will cost $6.9 million.

When school in Grand Forks was officially cancelled for the year—six weeks shy of a normal school year—an estimated 3,500 local students enrolled in schools all over the state.

Relocated teachers and support staff volunteered to help teach increasing class loads in neighboring districts. Some of us taught classes at the Air Force base, in bedrooms of homes that weren't destroyed, or in nearby libraries.

Association members who stayed near Grand Forks answered phones, served Red Cross meals, opened their homes to friends, used their boats to rescue pets, and continued to help in the effort to restore water, sewer, and power to the city.

It's difficult to describe the feelings we had when first faced with the task of putting our homes and schools back together. A goal of repairing them by fall seemed impossible.

Instead of saying we were "taking it a day at a time," we adopted a more realistic tone—we said we were "taking it an hour at a time."

Some of us haven't returned to our homes and may never be able to, but many have finished mucking out the basement or have found temporary housing in a FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) trailer.

Now, as summer winds down, an "hour" at a time has once again become a "day" at a time.

Now we realize that we will get through this.

With the help of NEA members and the generosity of people nationwide, we will rebuild. We will be ready for the school year.

Max Laird and Dan Hinnenkamp are Grand Forks, North Dakota teachers and Association activists.

Those who want to contribute to clean-up efforts can send a donation to the NDEA Disaster Relief Fund, North Dakota Education Association, P.O. Box 5005, Bismarck, North Dakota 58502.

ship, once said that when he tells others of his desire to achieve in the sports world, they inevitably discourage him and tell him to have a back-up career plan. Adults, he said, rarely discourage those who say they want to be doctors, even though the chances of that are also slim.

I suggest we never discourage a child from any dream. The bottom line in our household was to take care of business (school) first, then practice, practice, practice.

Jan Thornton
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

At the Movies

I see you gave Congressman Tom Coburn a zero for criticizing NBC's airing of *Schindler's List* (Heroes & Zeroes, April). Since when do we, as educators, not object to this kind of movie being shown in prime time?

It seems that NEA endorses "nudity, profanity, and violence" viewing for our children. Does this mean that I should accept this in my classroom? I do not and never will.

Adolf Pelzer
Benton Harbor, Michigan

[illegible]es All Around

[illegible] a sportsman who knows the positive benefits of target shooting, and as a father who knows the positive benefits of teaching abstinence, I'm not only surprised, but offended that you give Idaho State Superintendent Anne Fox a zero (Heroes & Zeroes, April).

Shouldn't alternatives to teen pregnancy be explored and financed? Shouldn't kids learn how to appropriately handle guns, rather than seeing them only as a tool of destruction?

How dare you blast anybody for trying to achieve success with kids. Ideas should be praised, not shunned.

C. Pete Peterson
Panaca, Nevada

"Second virginity"—the idea promoted by Idaho's Anne Fox—is simply the idea that even though students have had sex in the past, they can change their lifestyle, morals, and mindset so it won't happen again until marriage. It does work.

In fact, it's the same exact concept used in most successful alcohol and drug education programs. Using your mindset, why not scrap all those programs?

Richard Slater
Camano Island, Washington

If a program like "second virginity" helps teach girls to respect themselves and stop being sexually active at such a young age, why is *NEA Today* against it?

Jolee Marie Mockler
Loganville, Wisconsin

I noticed that you gave Idaho's state superintendent a zero for proposing target shooting as an interscholastic sport. As a range safety officer at national rifle matches for 17 years, I know that competitive target shooting has some real advantages for students.

To name a few: It requires mental discipline and concentration. It's open to disabled athletes who may not be able to compete in other sports. It's incredibly safe and teaches safety.

Glenn Sheathelm
Muskegon, Michigan

Oldest Middle School?

In 1967, amid parental protests and community concerns, Crossroads Middle School opened its doors. Since then, the school has been nationally recognized for its innovative approach. We're organized into seven heterogeneous "families" composed of six teachers and 120 students.

This fall, Crossroads will move to a new building. While researching the school's history, students have asked if Crossroads is the oldest middle school in the United States. Does anyone know?

Send replies to me at Crossroads Middle School, P.O. Box 182, Georges Rd., Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852.

Dorothy Kohrherr
Monmouth Junction, New Jersey

Sweet Smell of Success

Your article "50 Ways to Get Free Stuff for Your School" (Cover story, February) was terrific. I contacted one of the organizations on your list, the Computer Recycling Web site, and was put in touch with the computer recycling site for my state.

As a result, our school received three Apple computers, one Mac SE, monitors, two printers, cables, manuals, and software for our classroom—all free of charge. Thanks so much for the tip.

Debra Teets
Uniontown, Pennsylvania
djteets@hhs.net

Let's Talk

Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of five ways:

- By mail: Write to Letters, NEA Today, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036
- By E-mail: Write to NEA Today@aol.com
- By fax: 202/822-7206
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Letters are edited for length and clarity.

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No other card gets you there faster.

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Free round-trip ticket to Europe	**35,000** points	50,000 points	40,000 – 60,000 points (changes seasonally)	50,000 points
Annual Fee	1st year **FREE**, $20 thereafter	$55	$50	$50

For the NEA Travel Rewards Program, the corresponding maximum dollar value for the award levels shown above are: 15,000 pts/$500; 35,000 pts/$1,000. For travel within a single zone, the award level and corresponding maximum dollar value is 10,000 pts/$300; for travel within North America and Mexico: 25,000 pts/$600. There may be up to two connections per flight. Annual fees shown are for standard cards only. Information shown in chart is accurate as of 5/14/97, based on an independent telephone survey.

† The annual fee for the NEA Credit Card with Travel Rewards is $20; fee is waived for the first year. The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) for purchases made with the NEA *Platinum Plus* card is 15.1%; for the NEA School Days card or NEA Gold card 15.6%, each APR may vary. The current promotional APR offer for cash advances and balance transfers made with any card is 5.9% through your first five statement closing dates commencing the month after your account is opened. Thereafter, the APR will vary according to the Variable Rate Information disclosures accompanying your card, and will apply to both new and outstanding cash advance balances. The current indexed APR for cash advances and balance transfers is 15.1% for the NEA *Platinum Plus* account, or 15.6% for the NEA School Days or NEA Gold account; APRs may vary. Transaction fee for Bank and ATM cash advances: 2% of each cash advance ($2 minimum, $10 maximum). Transaction fee for credit card cash advance checks: 1% of cash advance ($2 minimum, $10 maximum). Transaction fee for the purchase of wire transfers, money orders, bets, lottery tickets, and casino gaming chips: 2% of each such purchase ($2 minimum, $10 maximum). The transaction fees for specially designated credit card cash advance checks are waived. MBNA may allocate your monthly payments to your promotional APR balance(s) before your non-promotional APR balance(s). Cash advances and balance transfers may not be used to pay off or pay down any other MBNA account.

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* **NEA Travel Rewards Highlights of Terms and Conditions:** These are highlights of the complete Terms and Conditions of the NEA *Travel Rewards* program ("Program"). The Program offers air travel, auto rental and hotel accommodation rewards in exchange for *Travel Rewards Point* earnings *("Point(s)")*.

Air travel rewards consist of a scheduled round-trip ticket for travel within or between two designated zones of the lower 48 states (Zone 1 – locations within the Eastern and Central time zones; Zone 2 – locations within the Mountain and Pacific time zones); plus travel from Alaska and Hawaii. The number of *Points* and corresponding maximum dollar value of tickets ("MDV") required for travel are: for travel wholly contained within Zone 1 or Zone 2: 10,000/$300; between Zones 1 and 2: 15,000/$500; to Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, the Bahamas or Bermuda: 25,000/$800; to Europe (and any other international destination which may be available; call NEA Passage Travel, 1-800-NEA-1104, for availability): 35,000/$1,000.

MDV includes taxes and destination fees. Tickets will be Economy class and will be the lowest available published fare at the time of booking. Whenever possible a direct flight will be booked; there is a limit of two connections. Actual date and time of travel are subject to availability. You may select a carrier and/or upgrade to first class travel; if you choose either, you may charge the cost difference to your *Travel Rewards* credit card and earn *Points* for the transaction. Additional terms apply. All reservations and ticketing must be at least 21 days before travel date. All travel must include a Saturday night stay. For international travel, your stay must be at least seven days but no more than 30 days. Other restrictions apply. Common Carrier Travel Accident Insurance coverage is applicable to any airline ticket obtained with *Points* and/or paid for with your *Travel Rewards* credit card. See your card benefits materials for coverage details.

Automobile rental rewards are for midsize vehicles with pickup and return to the same rental location anywhere within the United States. Advance reservations of at least seven days are required and are subject to availability. You must meet all credit, age, and driver requirements in effect at the time and place of rental. 2,000 *Points* are needed for each single day rental (MDV: $60, including tax); 1,000 *Points* for a single weekend day rental (MDV: $35, including tax) and 9,000 *Points* for a seven-day rental period (MDV: $300, including tax). Optional charges are your responsibility. Other conditions apply. Your credit card supplemental collision damage waiver coverage is available.

Hotel accommodation rewards are valid at participating properties in the United States. Advance reservations of at least seven days are required and are subject to availability. There is no minimum stay requirement. Rewards are valid for a standard single- or double-occupancy room with a nightly rate, including tax. Personal, optional and incidental expenses are your responsibility. These are the current requirements for a hotel accommodation reward: for a nightly room rate up to $110: 3,000 *Points* and for a room rate up to $200: 5000 *Points*.

The Program has a yearly fee, currently $20. You may accrue an annual maximum of 70,000 *Points*. Your *Points* may not be combined with anyone else's *Points*. *Points* will expire five years from the end of the year in which they are earned. *Points* have no cash value. *Points* may be earned and redeemed only if your account is in good standing.

Earn one *Point* for every dollar of qualifying balances transferred to the *Travel Rewards* account and for every dollar in Net Purchases. To earn *Points*, a balance transfer to the *Travel Rewards* account must be at least $500, there is no maximum amount. "Net Purchase" means the purchase of goods or services by you or your authorized user (s) with the *Travel Rewards* credit card, less credits and plus or minus any adjustments. Net Purchases does not include finance charges; cash advance transactions (except for qualifying balance transfers); any balance(s) permissibly transferred between MBNA accounts; cash advances redesignated as purchases; the purchase of money orders, wire transfers, bets, lottery tickets, or casino gaming chips; unauthorized charges; credit life insurance premiums; late or over-the-credit-limit fees; and other fees and charges assessed on your account. Fractions of dollar values of Net Purchases will be rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

For current NEA Credit Card customers who convert their account to an NEA Credit Card with Travel Rewards account the minimum balance transfer to earn points is $500; the maximum is $5,000. Balance transfers must occur within 60 days to be eligible to earn points.

There are no exchanges or refunds for no-shows or partially used rewards. Lost, stolen, or otherwise destroyed travel documents may not be reissued or replaced. *Points* may not be combined with any other discounts, special rates, promotions, or other rewards programs offered by MBNA or any other entity, including airline frequent flyer programs or airline credit card programs. No retroactive *Points* will be awarded.

MBNA reserves the right to change any or all of the terms, benefits, or conditions of participation in this program, including, but not limited to, withdrawing, limiting or modifying any reward or increasing the number of *Points* required for any reward. Violations of the terms of this program may result in liability for damages, termination of program eligibility, loss of *Points*, and revocation of issued but unused rewards.

In the event of any cancellation, irregularity, or mishap affecting reward travel or reservations, MBNA will not be responsible for any expenses incurred due to such event(s). All travel-related services are provided by independent contractor(s) who are not affiliated with MBNA. Neither MBNA nor the independent contractor(s) shall be liable for any bodily harm and or property damage that may result from your participation in this program.

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The 1997-98

Resolutions

of the National Education Association

As adopted by delegates to the
NEA Representative Assembly
July 3-6, 1997
Atlanta, Georgia

FOREWORD

The Constitution of the National Education Association indicates that the goals of the Association shall be the ten goals stated in the Preamble of the Constitution. These goals are, therefore, regularly set forth in a statement of resolutions adopted by the Representative Assembly.

Resolutions are formal expressions of opinion, intent, belief, or position of the Association. They shall set forth general concepts in clear, concise language, shall be broad in nature, shall state the positions of the Association positively and without ambiguity, and shall be consistent with the goals of the Association as stated in the Preamble.

A. SERVE AS THE NATIONAL VOICE FOR EDUCATION

A-1. Public Education

The National Education Association believes that public educational opportunities for every American must be preserved and strengthened.

The Association also believes that public education is the cornerstone of our social, economic, and political structure and is of utmost significance in the development of our moral, ethical, spiritual, and cultural values. The Association further believes that each state must maintain a system of public education that prepares its citizens to —

a. Achieve functional proficiency in English, with emphasis on the development of basic reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills
b. Compute effectively to procure and/or dispense services and materials
c. Use critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills
d. Exercise attitudes of good citizenship, societal productivity, and global awareness
e. Care for the environment
f. Appreciate the aesthetic and moral qualities of life
g. Formulate values that lead to continual growth and self-fulfillment
h. Recognize and appreciate the cultural, social, political, and religious differences
i. Use leisure time effectively and develop sound physical health habits
j. Develop skills in and/or an appreciation for the practical/vocational and fine arts.

The Association further believes that its members should support public education by sending their children to public educational institutions. (69, 97)

A-2. Educational Opportunity for All

The National Education Association believes that each student has the right to a free public education which should be suited to the needs of the individual and guaranteed by state constitutions and the United States Constitution. Education is a lifelong process, and public schools serve a constituency that embraces all age groups. Access and opportunities for postsecondary education should be widely available, and no qualified student should be denied such opportunities because of the cost of tuition and fees.

The Association also believes that all schools must be accredited under uniform standards established by the appropriate agencies in collaboration with the Association and its affiliates and that the accreditation process must provide sufficient flexibility to enable individual schools to respond to the needs of their students and community. The development of a periodic review of locally established programs should involve community members, parents, students, teachers, and educational support personnel. The Association further believes that individuals, at their expense, should be free to choose, to supplement, or to substitute education in privately supported, nonsegregated, nonpublic schools.

The Association further believes tax-exempt status should be denied to those institutions whose policies and/or practices prevent the integration of the institutions. (69, 97)

A-3. Understanding and Support of Public Education

The National Education Association recognizes its responsibility to promote understanding and support of public education and public education employees and to encourage wide community and parental participation in achieving and maintaining educational excellence. The Association believes that school boards have a responsibility to promote public understanding of the importance of the public schools.

The Association also believes that the success of our nation depends upon high standards of educational excellence. The Association supports high standards for student behavior and achievement, excellence in teaching, a positive school environment, and high parental expectations for both their children and the schools. The Association also recognizes its responsibility to publicize adverse educational conditions and to support efforts to improve such conditions. (69, 97)

A-4. American Education Week

The National Education Association believes that American Education Week is an important observance during which positive attention should be focused on the contributions of education and education employees. (97)

A-5. Excellence in Education

The National Education Association believes that continued success of the United States as a participatory democracy and as a world leader is dependent upon a shared national, state, community, and individual commitment to excellence in education. The Association also believes that mastery is a standard of excellence achieved when students demonstrate the ability to use what has been taught and have command of subjects sufficient for problem solving, decision making, and further educational growth. To that end, the Association reaffirms its support of high standards for teaching and learning in which the student becomes an active participant in the mastery process.

The Association believes that sufficient resources and program alternatives should be provided for the proper placement of each student so that social promotions can be prevented or minimized. (83, 97)

A-6. U.S. Department of Education

The National Education Association believes that the U.S. Department of Education must be a viable force for the maintenance and improvement of public education in the United States. The Association further believes that Association members must be fully involved in establishing goals and planning programs with the Department.

The Association further believes that internal and external attempts to dismantle and to erode the effectiveness of the Department of Education through the federal budgetary process are detrimental to the public interest. (80, 88)

A-7. Appointments by the President of the United States

The National Education Association believes that the need for quality education demands that criteria for presidential appointments in the field of education shall include a commitment to public education and significant contributions to the education community. Education employees should be included in such appointments. (70, 90)

A-8. Business Support for Public Education

The National Education Association believes that the business community and the Association should work cooperatively in promoting, planning, implementing, and evaluating school-community-business partnerships in the support of public education. The Association welcomes from the business community supplementary activities such as cooperative programs, resource assistance, release of employees for parent-teacher conferences, funding for scholarships, and the donation of specialized equipment.

The Association also believes that the use of programs that involve the marketing of and/or the promoting of products that exploit students and/or institutions should be prevented. (84, 96)

A-9. School Boards

The National Education Association believes that the composition of school boards must be representative of the population within the school district, including minority groups; that board members must be elected by the voters in the school district; and that board members must be elected from representative districts. The Association also believes that provisions should be made for parents and/or guardians of students who are attending school in a district other than their home district as part of a court-ordered interdistrict busing plan to have substantive influence on board actions and policies.

The Association further believes that student participation in a school board's deliberative process should be encouraged; however, student input in the voting process should be advisory only. Wherever a school board includes student members, the Association believes that the student members should be excluded from participating in discussions, receiving information, and voting on issues dealing with school personnel and items contained in negotiated agreements.

The Association also believes that school board meetings must be held at times and places that allow education employees, local affiliates, and the community to participate in educational decision making. (80, 97)

A-10. Public School Buildings

The National Education Association believes that closed public school buildings that have been deemed safe can be used effectively for public preschool, day care, job training, and adult education centers. The Association believes that closed public school buildings should be sold or leased only to those organizations that do not provide direct educational services to students and/or are not in direct competition with public schools. (82, 87)

A-11. Black Higher Education Institutions

The National Education Association recognizes that historically Black institutions of higher education have played a vital role in helping Americans in their efforts toward building a truly pluralistic society.

The Association believes that the programs of historically Black

institutions should continue to be reviewed and updated so that they will maintain diverse and quality faculties and student bodies.

The Association urges its affiliates to be in the forefront of all efforts that seek to support, maintain, and promote these invaluable institutions, their programs, and their full participation in the mainstream of education. The Association further believes that closing, downgrading, or merging historically Black institutions would not be in the best interest of the educational community. (80, 95)

A-12. School Accountability

The National Education Association supports holding school sites accountable when other parts of a comprehensive system — district, state, and national stakeholders — are also held accountable for providing the resources and other support personnel systems and materials necessary for schools to reach their goals. An effective and fair school accountability system must focus on the school as the unit for improvement and evaluation and ensure that the best practices are encouraged and supported.

The Association believes school accountability systems must include training for education employees through staff development prior to implementation and procedures for evaluating and improving such systems. Exposure to school accountability systems should also be a part of pre-service preparation.

The Association further believes that school accountability must be implemented throughout the school community through a collaborative, interactive, and continuous process by which students and parents, educators, the public, and policymakers define and support the goals of the school.

A well-designed school accountability system—

a. Promotes educational excellence
b. Has a balanced focus combining school context, processes, and student performance to guide improvement efforts
c. Is based on a wide array of authentic data, including an examination of the resources needed and those allocated
d. Focuses on the school and its goals, not on the individual performance of the school staff or other stakeholders
e. Is consistent with school employees' rights and responsibilities as set forth in collective bargaining laws and contracts, meet and confer understandings, and/or policies
f. Is applied in a fair and equitable manner. (71, 97)

A-13. Federal Financial Support for Education

The National Education Association believes that the federal government has a legitimate and proper concern and responsibility for the quality of public education provided to its citizens that arise from the needs of our national social, economic, and political system. The Association asserts that a major federal role is to ensure equality of educational opportunity for all. A second role is to collect basic data to be used in public schools and to engage in research, development, and consultation activities that support quality state and local education programs. A third federal role is to grant supplemental aid to states that are not able to raise adequate funds to provide all students with a high-quality education and to provide funding to support state and local government efforts in pursuit of national interests in public education. Therefore, federal funding formulas should reflect the most current, accurate accounting of the public school population, measurements of poverty, and the state's ability to raise adequate funds. The Association further believes that funding for federal programs should be substantially increased, not merely redistributed among states.

The Association will continually seek general federal support for the whole of public elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education. The federal monies must be expended solely and equitably for public education. The Association also condemns and deplores federal policies and programs that serve to undermine America's historical commitment to free public education. Therefore, it seeks support in accordance with the following principles:

a. In assisting local school districts, the federal government must assume a full partnership role by providing significant levels of federal funding for elementary and secondary education through a program of general aid and categorical assistance.
b. In recognition of its high priority, federal education funding must be clear and identifiable within the federal budget.
c. Federally funded instructional programs should have maximum teacher involvement in their development at the federal level and must be implemented at the local level only after the involvement and approval of the recognized bargaining agent or local affiliate.
d. Advisory committees for federally funded programs should reflect the ethnic makeup of local communities and maintain a gender balance to ensure accountability and equity. Parents, students, and educators should be included as members of these committees.
e. The amount of aid must be generally predictable for long-range planning and specifically predictable for year-to-year planning.
f. Federal legislation must comply with civil rights statutes, be consistent with the constitutional provision respecting the establishment of religion, and provide for judicial review as to its constitutionality.
g. Categorical funding is essential and must be assured in areas such as special education, bilingual/English as a second language, and the economically/educationally disadvantaged.

The Association supports federal funding for postsecondary education, including —

a. Programs of institutional, scholar, and student support
b. Grants to support vital research functions
c. Student financial assistance to assure access and choice for all qualified students who wish to pursue all levels of postsecondary education, regardless of personal financial means
d. Support of historically Black colleges and developing institutions.

The Association will oppose those provisions in federal legislation and/or current laws that include funds, goods, or services related to the instructional process for nonpublic schools or nonpublic school students in elementary and secondary education. (83, 94)

A-14. Public Education/National Defense

The National Education Association believes that maintenance of a strong system of public education is paramount to maintaining a strong U.S. national defense. Whenever there is a redirection of resources from military purposes, the Association supports a policy of economic conversion to facilitate the orderly redirection of such resources to alternative civilian uses, including education. (85, 97)

A-15. Financial Support of Public Education

The National Education Association believes that public education must be supported from public tax sources. The Association also believes that—

a. An increasing portion of public funds should be for direct instruction of the student.
b. The amount of aid must be generally predictable for long-range planning and specifically predictable for year-to-year planning.
c. Present programs of specific aid must be expanded and improved by consolidation and simplification of administration.
d. Tax revision favorable to public education should be encouraged and continually reviewed at every governmental level.
e. Local governing boards must be fiscally independent, and restrictive limits must not be imposed on their budgets or long-term borrowing.
f. The state and local share of finance must be derived from a tax system that is balanced and complementary in nature, includes all broad-based taxes, reduces the excessive reliance on property taxes, and protects subsistence income.
g. Provisions must be made for research, development, and improvement in education practices.
h. School trust lands should be used productively for the maximum benefit of public school students. Such trust lands must be administered with the generation of funds for public education as a primary goal. State school trust funds should be fairly compensated by the federal government for school trust lands included in national parks, monuments or wilderness areas.
i. Funds must be provided for programs to alleviate race, gender, and sexual orientation discrimination and to eliminate portrayal of race, gender, and sexual orientation stereotypes in the public schools.
j. Public funds must not be expended for any materials used to promote race, gender, or sexual orientation stereotypes and/or bias.
k. Public funds must not be expended in institutions where either specific programs or the institution has been found guilty of discrimination.
l. Categorical funding must be assured in areas such as special education, bilingual/English as a second language, and the economically/educationally disadvantaged.
m. Any institution, agency, or individual receiving financial aid from federal, state, or local governments must adhere to all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.

The Association opposes the use of public revenues for private, parochial, or other nonpublic pre-K through 12 schools. (77, 97)

A-16. Federal Financial Support for Postsecondary Education

The National Education Association supports the maintenance and expansion of funding for postsecondary education, including programs of institutional and scholar support, research grants, support for the historically Black and developing institutions, and student financial

assistance to assure access and choice for all qualified students—regardless of personal financial means—who wish to pursue postsecondary education. The Association believes that student need, as well as enrollment, should be a criterion for funding postsecondary education. The Association further believes that need-based student financial assistance should be available through all postsecondary education institutions as well as governmental agencies. (86, 97)

A-17. Higher Education Research and Study Grants

The National Education Association believes that both the governmental and private sectors should provide research and study grants to higher education faculties in all academic areas. Such grants should be awarded on the basis of merit without discrimination. The dissemination of grants should not be used to influence university decisions and policies.

The Association believes that the process of study and research grants provided should influence neither undergraduate nor graduate curriculums until such time as the research is completed and systematically integrated into the curriculums.

The Association further believes that our national economic well being is dependent upon the expansion of the highest quality research and training in our professional and graduate schools as well as the recruitment and training of a diverse and highly skilled workforce.

The Association further believes that academic freedom applies to research and the dissemination of research results. (85, 96)

A-18. Federal Impact Aid

The National Education Association supports funding to maintain quality education for students in school districts impacted by federal policies, lands, activities, and installations. A financial crisis exists in many impacted areas because of insufficient, temporary, year-to-year appropriations.

The Association urges a permanent solution to the financial problems of severely impacted school districts, ensuring federal support at least to the degree that their local revenues are impaired or their costs increased.

The Association also endorses the concept of a national payments-in-lieu-of-taxes program. This endorsement does not affect the Association's continued support of current impact aid programs. The establishment of any payments-in-lieu program shall not adversely affect any locality currently receiving impact aid. (70, 94)

A-19. Education of Refugee Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants

The National Education Association believes that, regardless of the immigration status of students or their parents, every student has the right to a free public education in an environment free from harassment. The Association also believes that the determination of legal residency status is the responsibility of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, not of educational systems or their employees. (80, 97)

A-20. Extracurricular Funding

The National Education Association believes that every public school student must have an opportunity to participate in school sanctioned and funded extracurricular programs.

The Association urges that equitable funds for transportation, facilities, equipment, and remuneration of staff be provided for all school-sanctioned extra-curricular activities. Funding should be equitably distributed between athletic and non-athletic extracurricular activities. The Association believes that extracurricular fundraising is not an accept-able substitute for district funding of extracurricular activities. (75, 96)

A-21. Educational/Economic Stability of States

The National Education Association believes that the educational well-being of the country depends upon the economic health of each of the regions, states, and localities.

The Association supports efforts to alleviate the effects of unemployment and supports retraining and appropriate job-creation legislation.

The Association supports efforts to correct policies that contribute to the particular economic difficulties of individual regions, states, and localities. (81, 93)

A-22. Tax Reform

The National Education Association supports tax reform and believes that it should—

a. Increase tax fairness and raise revenue necessary to finance quality public education and other public services
b. Prevent excessive reliance on property tax or any other single tax
c. Reflect the findings of comprehensive studies of the total individual and corporate tax burden
d. Assure a tax burden distribution that reflects the ability to pay and that safeguards family subsistence
e. Assure that statewide uniformity in property tax effort be required
f. Provide for increased local and state funding of public education
g. Not be used to place arbitrary maximum limits on any state or local government's ability to spend or tax, particularly since such limits have a negative impact on the full funding of schools
h. Eliminate tax laws and rulings that are harmful to education employees and educational needs. (78, 96)

A-23. Financial Crisis

The National Education Association believes that free public education is in a financial crisis. The Association seeks to maintain and expand educational programs for students by seeking public and legislative financial support. The Association believes that quality education requires adequate personnel, teaching materials, and supplies as priorities to be considered in the event of financial crisis.

The Association opposes the establishment of ad hoc classrooms in the event of school closures. (75, 94)

A-24. Educational Bureaucracy

The National Education Association believes that expanding the educational bureaucracy severely limits optimal classroom instruction. Affiliates should work toward a teacher-led educational system that will reduce bureaucracy. (77, 96)

A-25. Improving Neglected Educational Facilities

The National Education Association believes that because many educational facilities are in a state of crisis, as evidenced by decay, neglect, and continuing deterioration, such institutions must be provided with the necessary financial resources to increase staff and to provide improved instructional materials and adequate physical facilities.

The Association also believes that the community, parents, guardians, students, teachers, and educational support personnel must be effectively involved in designing programs to implement positive change. (69, 97)

A-26. Charter and Nontraditional Public School Options

The National Education Association supports innovation in public education. The Association believes that when concepts such as charter schools and other nontraditional school options are proposed, all affected public school employees must be directly involved in the design, implementation, and governance of these programs.

The Association further believes that plans should not negatively impact the regular public school program and must include adequate safeguards covering contract and employment provisions for all employees, voluntary participation, health and safety standards for all students and employees, nondiscrimination and equal educational opportunity, staffing by licensed professional staff, and financial responsibility. Programs must be adequately funded, must include start-up monies, must not divert current funds from the regular public school programs, and must contain appropriate procedures for regular periodic assessment and evaluation. (93, 97)

A-27. Deleterious Programs

The National Education Association believes that the following programs and practices are detrimental to public education and must be eliminated: privatization, performance contracting, tax credits for tuition to private and parochial schools, voucher plans (or funding formulas that have the same effect as vouchers), planned program budgeting systems (PPBS), and evaluations by private, profit-making groups.

The Association believes that proposals that would allow or foster the flow of public monies to private, parochial or sectarian schools; the resegregation of the schools; a selectivity in admissions; the employment of unlicensed or uncertified educators; and a weakening of collective bargaining protections are detrimental to the health and well-being of the public schools and should be defeated.

The Association also believes that tax credit programs, management-by-objective systems, block grants, and revenue sharing programs have at times been implemented in ways that are harmful to public education. The Association further believes such programs should be monitored to prevent such abuses. (74, 97)

A-28. Federally or State-Mandated Choice/Parental Option Plans

The National Education Association believes that federally or state-mandated parental option or choice plans compromise the Association's commitment to free, equitable, universal, and quality public education for every student. Therefore, the Association opposes such federally or state-mandated choice or parental option plans.

The Association believes that local districts, in partnership with state and federal governments, must provide a quality education for every student by securing sufficient funding to maintain and to enhance excellence in each local public school district.

The Association continues to support alternative programs for specific purposes in the public schools. (89)

A-29. Voucher Plans and Tuition Tax Credits

The National Education Association believes that voucher plans and tuition tax credits or funding formulas that have the same effect — under which pre-K through 12 nonpublic school education is subsidized by tax monies — undermine public education, reduce the support needed to adequately fund public education, and have the potential for racial, economic, and social segregation of children. The Association opposes all attempts to establish and/or implement such plans. (70, 96)

A-30. Media Utilization

The National Education Association believes that the broadcasting industry must serve the public interest and educational process. The Association encourages the creative and innovative use of media for improving instruction. It is essential that teachers or their designees have the right to record programs off the air and play them back on a delayed basis sufficient to meet the needs of effective teaching.

The Association further believes that the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS television), National Public Radio (NPR), and expanding cable television (CATV) should provide communication services to education. Federal regulations should guarantee the reservation of at least 20 percent of the channel capacity of CATV systems for public school access and other public purposes.

The Association urges its affiliates to become involved in the program development and utilization of each of these media resources. The Association further urges the continuation of local, state, and federal financial support for public broadcasting. (81, 96)

A-31. Community Education

The National Education Association believes that the concept of community education encourages schools to provide leadership in solving community problems.

The Association urges its state affiliates to become involved in the promotion, expansion, and implementation of community education programs in their states. (77, 86)

A-32. Rural Education

The National Education Association supports a strong rural educational system and the preservation of the community infrastructure in rural America.

The Association believes that rural areas contain a range of conditions that make them unique and supports the development of programs that recognize and deal with rural needs. The Association recognizes that equal per pupil funding may not provide equal education. The Association further believes in equal educational programs and the equitable funding of such programs. Neither shall be dependent on geographical location, density of population, or consolidation of rural schools. (76, 97)

A-33. Urban Development

The National Education Association believes that professional organizations should be concerned about the quality of life in our cities and should advocate policies or programs concerning land use, zoning, urban development, economic growth, plant closings, mass transit, rent subsidy, or other issues vitally affecting patterns of community development and subsequently the quality of education in our schools. (74, 88)

A-34. U.S. Federal Schools

The National Education Association believes that all federal schools, except those under the control of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, should come under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Education.

The Association further believes that all dependents of U.S. government employees overseas and in Section VI schools should be afforded the opportunity to attend such schools and is unalterably opposed to any attempt by Congress to privatize any of these federal schools. (80, 95)

B. ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF EDUCATION FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS

B-1. Early Childhood Education

The National Education Association supports early childhood education programs in the public schools for children from birth through age eight. The Association supports a high-quality program of transition from home and/or preschool to the public kindergarten or first grade. This transition should include communication and cooperation among parents, the preschool staff, and the public school staff. The Association believes that such programs should be held in facilities that are appropriate to the developmental needs of these children. The Association further believes that early childhood education programs should include a full continuum of services for parents and children, including child care, child development, developmentally appropriate and diversity-based curricula, special education, and appropriate bias-free screening devices. Early childhood education programs also must be sensitive to and meet the physical, social, mental, and emotional health and nutritional needs of children.

The Association believes that early childhood education programs should maintain small group size with appropriate staff/child ratios for each age. These programs must be staffed by the appropriate ratio of teachers, administrators, and support staff who are prepared in early childhood education and child development. Males should be encouraged and recruited to enter and be actively involved in early childhood education. Preparation programs for staff should lead to credentials consistent with the educational standards in each state.

The Association recognizes the importance of parental involvement in a child's development. The Association further supports the provision of training programs that prepare parents to take an active role in the child's education. These programs should provide an awareness of the expectations that will be placed on the child as well as familiarization with new policies and procedures that the child will experience in the new environment.

The Association believes that federal legislation should be enacted to assist in organizing the implementation of fully funded early childhood education programs offered through the public schools. These programs should be available to all children on an equal basis and should include mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance.

The Association supports regulations requiring children starting kindergarten to have reached age five at the beginning of a kindergarten program.

The Association advocates the establishment of fully funded early childhood special education programs. These programs and necessary services should be readily accessible for children with disabilities and staffed by certified/licensed teachers, qualified support staff, and therapists. (75, 95)

B-2. Middle School and Junior High Programs

The National Education Association recognizes the academic, personal, and special needs of the early adolescent or middle school learner.

The Association encourages development of a curriculum that establishes realistic academic challenges that foster positive self-esteem.

The Association further encourages the development of guidance and counseling programs that stimulate parental and community involvement, promote health services, and promote preservice and professional development programs for educators. (76, 93)

B-3. High School Diploma/Equivalency

The National Education Association supports the concept of a high school education for all and believes that every student should earn a high school diploma or its equivalent. The Association also believes in the value of academic preparation, school attendance, and social interaction for meeting the requirements of high school graduation.

The Association believes that high school equivalency testing can be misused and have a negative impact on secondary education. The Association recognizes, however, that in some instances the use of high school equivalency tests is acceptable when the best interests of the students are served.

The Association further believes that any state or district plan to use equivalency testing as the basis for qualification for a high school diploma should be developed cooperatively by classroom teachers, administrators, and governing boards. The plan should include provisions for recommendations from the local school faculty. Recommendations should be based, as a minimum, upon achievement record, ability, and age and should be developmentally appropriate for the student. (76, 95)

B-4. Higher Education

The National Education Association supports higher education as an essential part of the education process. The Association believes that postsecondary education serves an invaluable function for intellectual development, for research and scholarship, for career preparation, and for preparation for life.

The Association supports access to postsecondary programs for all

qualified students without regard to age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, military registration status, or ability to pay. The Association also believes that postsecondary institutions should not penalize degree-holding students who return to upgrade or develop new skills.

The Association further supports fully funded, guaranteed student loan and grant programs, including fully funded health care insurance. Guaranteed loans should be made available for all students. Criteria for grants should include the total financial situation of the family, other family members currently enrolled in institutions of higher education, and parents' ability to contribute financially.

The Association also believes that clear admission and graduation standards, careful student counseling, tutorial and other support services, the right to complete coursework during or after the quarter/semester missed due to documented extended illness, active participation of students in their own learning, and a thoughtfully articulated curriculum can significantly help increase the number of students successfully completing their degrees.

The Association further believes that all courses must be offered with sufficient frequency and with a sufficient number of sections to enable students to graduate within the time prescribed for each program. (80, 97)

B-5. Class Size

The National Education Association believes that excellence in the classroom can best be attained by small class size.

The Association also believes in an optimum class size of fifteen students in regular programs and a proportionately lower number in programs for students with exceptional needs. Class size maximums must be based on the type of students, subject area content, physical facilities, and other criteria. Weighted class size formulas should be implemented to reflect the inclusion of exceptional students. State departments of education should collect and report class size data that reflect the class size experienced by most students. (82, 97)

B-6. Diversity

The National Education Association believes that our diverse society enriches all individuals. Similarities and differences among races, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, size, occupation, and marital, parental, or economic status form the fabric of our society.

The Association also believes that education should increase tolerance and foster an appreciation of the various qualities that pertain to people as individuals or members of a group.

The Association further believes in the importance of observances, programs, and curricula that accurately portray and recognize the roles, contributions, cultures, and history of these diverse groups and individuals.

The Association further encourages affiliates and members to become part of programs and observances that may include cultural and heritage celebrations and/or history months. (95, 97)

B-7. Racism, Sexism, and Sexual Orientation Discrimination

The National Education Association believes in the equality of all individuals. Discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as race, gender, immigration status, disability, ethnicity, occupation, and sexual orientation must be eliminated.

The Association also believes that plans, activities, and programs for education employees, students, parents, and the community should be developed to identify and eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in all educational settings. Such plans, activities, and programs must—

a. Increase acceptance of and sensitivity to individuals and groups in a diverse society composed of such groups as American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asians and Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Hispanics, women, gays and lesbians, and people with disabilities
b. Eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in the curriculum, textbooks, resource and instructional materials, activities, etc.
c. Foster the use of nondiscriminatory, nonracist, nonsexist and nonstereotypical language, resources, practices, and activities
d. Eliminate institutional discrimination
e. Integrate an accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of all groups throughout history across the curriculum
f. Identify how prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination have limited the roles and contributions of individuals and groups
g. Eliminate subtle practices that favor the education of one student over another on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

The Association encourages its affiliates to develop and implement training programs on these matters. (96, 97)

B-8. American Indian/Alaska Native Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of American Indian/Alaska Native children require the direct involvement of parents, Native educators, tribal leaders, and other Native groups in developing programs that preserve the rich heritage of their cultures.

The Association believes that funding for American Indian/Alaska Native education must provide for improvements. The Association supports the movement toward self-determination by American Indians/Alaska Natives provided that such programs are voluntary. Any termination of federal support as either a direct or an indirect result of efforts to extend self-determination is opposed.

The Association believes in efforts that provide for—

a. Involvement and control of the education of American Indian/Alaska Native students by their parents, communities, and educators
b. Opportunities for higher education for all American Indian/Alaska Native students through direct governmental assistance in graduate and undergraduate programs
c. Involvement of American Indians/Alaska Natives in lobbying efforts for federal programs
d. Protection and maintenance of the integrity of American Indian/Alaska Native families and their tribal cultures so that, if a child has to be removed from his or her home, placement should be determined by the child's tribe
e. Recognition of American Indian/Alaska Native educators as role models
f. Involvement of American Indians/Alaska Natives in teacher training programs dealing with cultural pluralism and Native values
g. American Indian/Alaska Native involvement in developing multicultural learning centers at higher education institutions.
h. English proficiency programs that are designed to meet the language needs of American Indian/Alaska Native students
i. Instruction in treaty rights and traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering practices by American Indians/Alaska Natives
j. Assistance to local and state associations in meeting the educational needs of American Indian/Alaska Native students
k. Coordination with American Indian/Alaska Native organizations and concerned agencies that promote the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of the American Indian/Alaska Native people
l. Dissemination of information and programs that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of American Indians/Alaska Natives
m. Control of Native lands by American Indians/Alaska Natives. (76, 96)

B-9. Hispanic Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of Hispanic children require the direct involvement of Hispanic educators, parents, and community leaders in developing programs that meet the cultural, language, and learning characteristics of these children.

The Association believes in efforts that provide for —

a. Programs establishing appropriate educational opportunities for Hispanic students
b. Grants and scholarships for higher education that will facilitate the recruitment, entry, and retention of Hispanics
c. Recognition of Hispanic educators as role models
d. Hiring and promotion of Hispanic educators at all levels of the education profession
e. The recruitment, training, and employment of bilingual teachers, counselors, and other professional and support staff to meet the needs of Hispanic students
f. English proficiency programs that are designed to meet the language needs of Hispanic students
g. Dissemination of information and programs that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of Hispanics.

The responsibility for developing and implementing programs for Hispanic children should be realized by state and local agencies, regardless of the availability of federal funds. (72, 96)

B-10. Asian and Pacific Islander Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of Asian and Pacific Islander children require the development of programs that preserve the rich heritage of their cultures.

The Association also believes in efforts that provide for the —

a. Preservice and continuing education of teachers
b. Development of curriculum and instructional materials and programs, including English proficiency programs that are designed

to meet the language needs of Asian and Pacific Islander students
c. Education of Asian and Pacific Islander adult refugees
d. Dissemination of programs and information that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of Asian and Pacific Islanders
e. Recognition of Asian and Pacific Islander educators as role models.

The Association encourages opportunities to preserve, promote, and perpetuate Asian and Pacific Islander heritage and culture. (79, 97)

B-11. Black American Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of Black American children require the direct involvement of Black American educators, parents, community leaders, and groups to assure the development of adequate and equal educational programs.

The Association believes that the infusion of Black studies and/or Afrocentric curricula into the instructional program acknowledges the contributions of African Americans to history and Africa as an integral part of world history. Further, the Association believes that these curricula must show a correlation among social, historical, political, and economic developments and events regarding Africa, African Americans, Europeans, and their descendants worldwide.

The Association also believes in efforts that provide for —

a. The preservation of Black heritage and culture
b. Funding of scholarships to facilitate the entry of Black students into the teaching profession
c. Recognition of Black educators as role models
d. Recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of Black educators, especially Black males at all levels of the education profession
e. Involvement of Black educators in developing educational materials used in classroom instruction
f. English proficiency programs in the regular instructional process for those Black students experiencing difficulty with standard English
g. Programs that address the alarming dropout rate among Black male students and the disproportionate teen pregnancy rate among Black female students and encourage continued education, thereby increasing their participation in the work force
h. Development of athletic programs that promote educational excellence, not just athletic power
i. Opposition to the resegregation of the public schools through special classes
j. Dissemination of information and programs that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of the Black American. (81, 96)

B-12. Discriminatory Academic Tracking

The National Education Association believes that the use of discriminatory academic tracking based on socioeconomic status, race, or gender must be eliminated in all public school settings. The Association urges its affiliates to oppose these practices. (88, 93)

B-13. Equal Opportunities Through Mathematics and Science Education

The National Education Association believes that mathematics education and science education are means of helping women and minorities enjoy equal opportunities and equitable treatment for full employment and full participation in our society.

The Association supports the development and maintenance of gender-free and culturally unbiased mathematics and science programs that meet the needs of women and ethnic groups. The Association further encourages the recruitment of females and minorities to enroll in mathematics and science courses, to participate actively in those courses, and to become professionals in those fields. (92, 94)

B-14. Left-Handed Students

The National Education Association believes in meeting the needs of all students in the public schools, including left-handed students. Toward this end, the Association and its affiliates urge appropriate governing agencies to provide desks, scissors, and all other materials and instruments necessary for left-handed students to achieve on an equal basis with right-handed students.

The Association strongly recommends preservice preparation and staff development for education employees that present strategies for handwriting instruction of left-handed students. Such training should also address sensitizing instructional staff to the needs and problems of left-handed students. (79, 95)

B-15. Education of Migrants

The National Education Association believes that migrant workers and their children are entitled to educational opportunities that address their diverse and unique educational needs.

The Association advocates the implementation of bilingual/bicultural and remedial instructional programs that address the individual instructional needs of migrant students in the United States, regardless of the availability of federal and state funds to support such programs. (75, 96)

B-16. Equity for Incarcerated Persons

The National Education Association believes that incarcerated persons, regardless of gender, are entitled to equal access to educational, recreational, and rehabilitative programs within all correctional systems. (90)

B-17. Alternative Programs for At-Risk and/or Special Needs Students

The National Education Association recognizes that there must be increased development and maintenance of alternative programs to meet the needs of at-risk and/or special needs students, prekindergarten through adult. The Association recommends early and appropriate identification and placement of these students. Teachers and administrators should receive necessary training in diagnostic processes and alternative methods of teaching and learning. Appropriate training should be provided to educational support staff also.

Programs should emphasize a broad range of activities for responding to students' differing behavioral patterns, interests, needs, and learning styles. These programs must be evaluated on stated objectives. Teachers in these programs must have a major role in designing the objectives and evaluations and working with appropriate school and community personnel to execute these objectives and evaluations.

The Association urges its affiliates to seek adequate compensation, planning time, materials, and facilities for teachers and counselors in these programs.

The Association supports the efforts of its affiliates to negotiate and legislate for the training of teachers seeking additional certification and hiring of an increased number of teachers with education in special areas.

In higher education settings, faculty and educational support personnel who are working with special needs students should be provided with appropriate resources to accommodate these students' special requirements.

The Association encourages its state affiliates to seek legislation that would require any person offering services to remediate, correct, or ameliorate reading, speech, language, behavioral, emotional, or learning disabilities, or related problems to be licensed under regulations of each state's department of public instruction or other appropriate agency. (77, 97)

B-18. Gifted, Talented, and Creative Students

The National Education Association believes there must be increased development of fully funded educational programs for gifted, talented, and creative students.

The Association further believes that educators need training in selecting reliable methods of identifying and teaching these students. Such identification shall not discriminate on any basis other than the exceptionality being identified. The Association also believes that training programs in gifted and talented education must be provided for all appropriate school employees to ensure support for such programs.

The Association urges local and state affiliates to encourage the development and implementation of such programs and methods to ensure that these special need areas are met. (80, 94)

B-19. Educational Programs for Limited English Proficiency Students

The National Education Association believes that limited English proficiency (LEP) students must have available to them programs that address their unique needs and that provide equal opportunity to all students, regardless of their primary language. Programs for LEP students should emphasize English proficiency while concurrently providing meaningful instruction in all other curriculum areas.

The Association also believes that LEP students should be placed in bilingual education programs to receive instruction in their native language from qualified teachers until such time as English proficiency is achieved. If no bilingual programs are available, these students should be taught in English-as-a-second-language (ESL) programs designed to meet their specific needs. Students should not be enrolled in special education classes solely because of linguistic differences.

The Association believes that model bilingual education programs, in which language minority students demonstrate an increase in

English language acquisition and academic achievement throughout the grade levels, should be promoted and supported at the federal, state, and local levels. Further, the Association advocates full funding of all instructional materials, resources, and programs for LEP students, as well as the training of education personnel to work with these students. The school district or other appropriate agency should provide released time for the training of teachers who instruct LEP students.

Educators, through a bargaining or other bilateral decision-making process, must be fully involved in the development and implementation of programs serving these students, including the assignment of teachers and the terms and conditions of their employment. Teachers should be compensated at the teacher's hourly rate of pay for any additional time spent in training. They should also be reimbursed for the cost of tuition, textbooks, and travel incurred in such training.

The Association values bilingual and multilingual competence and supports programs that assist individuals in attaining and maintaining proficiency in their native language before and after they acquire proficiency in English. (81, 97)

B-20. Speakers of Nonstandard English

The National Education Association believes that students who enter school as speakers of nonstandard dialects are learners with unique needs, and these needs must be provided for in the overall program in each local school district. The Association believes that programs for these students must provide equal opportunity, should emphasize proficiency in standard English which will provide the students the opportunity to succeed in all aspects of daily life, and should concurrently provide meaningful instruction in all other curriculum areas. The Association advocates programs that begin with the linguistic proficiencies demonstrated by entering students, and build a program from that starting point.

The Association believes that in all cases, the students' linguistic and/or cultural backgrounds must be respected within the school setting. Under no circumstances should students who speak nonstandard dialects be enrolled in special education classes solely because of linguistic differences. (97)

B-21. Education for All Students with Disabilities

The National Education Association supports a free, appropriate public education for all students with disabilities in a least restrictive environment, which is determined by maximum teacher and parent involvement. There must be a full continuum of placement options and services/delivery models available to students with disabilities. In order to implement federal special education legislation effectively, the Association recognizes that:

a. The educational environment, using appropriate instructional materials, support services, and pupil personnel services, must match the learning needs of both students with and students without disabilities.
b. Student placement must be based on individual needs rather than on available space, funding, or local philosophy of a school district, must be examined on a regular basis to ensure appropriateness, and should not be made disproportionately by ethnicity or gender. Necessary building/staff modifications must be provided to facilitate such placement.
c. Regular and special education classroom teachers must have a major role in determining an individual education program (IEP) and the appropriateness of educational methods, materials, professional development, and supportive services and must receive a copy of the IEP.
d. Regular and special education teachers, pupil personnel staff, administrators, educational support personnel, and parents must share in planning and implementing the IEP. Prior to implementation, all necessary educational materials, professional development, and supportive services must be provided.
e. Students with physical disabilities and/or medical needs requiring nursing procedures must have their medical needs met by certified/professional school nurses.
f. All impacted staff members must have an appeal procedure regarding the implementation of the IEP, especially in terms of student placement. The procedure must include the right to have the dissenting opinion recorded and attached to the IEP.
g. Suspension and expulsion policies and practices used by local education agencies must be applied consistently to both students with and students without disabilities where misconduct is shown to be unrelated to either the disabling condition or to improper placement.
h. A plan recognizing individual differences must be used in a systematic evaluation and reporting of program development.
i. Limitations must be made in class size, using methods such as weighted formulas, modified scheduling, and/or curriculum design to accommodate the demands of each IEP.
j. All teachers who serve students with disabilities must have scheduled access to resource personnel, instructional assistants, paraprofessionals, co-teachers, and special education teachers.
k. The student's IEP should not be used as criteria for the evaluation of education employees.
l. Communications must be maintained among all involved parties.
m. Staff must not be reduced.
n. All staff must be adequately prepared for their roles through appropriate licensing and ongoing professional development programs.
o. Incentives for participation in professional development activities should, as mandated by law, be made available for education employees.
p. Education employees, as mandated by law, must be appointed to local and state advisory bodies on special education.
q. Education employees must be allowed to take part in the U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services on-site visits to states. Education employees should be invited to these meetings.
r. Local associations and education employees must be recruited, trained, and involved in monitoring school system compliance with federal special education legislation.
s. Adequate released time or funded additional time must be made available so that teachers can carry out the increased demands placed upon them by federal special education legislation.
t. Collective bargaining and other means should be used to minimize the potentially severe impact on staff that results from the implementation of special education legislation.
u. Benefits for staff working with students with disabilities must be negotiated through collective bargaining agreements and must be honored.
v. Full funding must be provided by local, state, and federal governments. (78, 95)

B-22. Educational Programs for Adolescent Parents

The National Education Association believes that school districts must meet the educational needs of adolescent students who are parents or who are about to become parents. Such students should not be discriminated against or denied equal educational opportunities.

The Association recommends programs for these students that include —

a. Flexible scheduling and attendance policies
b. Appropriate guidance in continuing/alternative education programs and productive employment
c. Development of self-esteem
d. Promotion of sound health practices regarding nutrition, substance abuse, exercise, family planning, and parenting skills
e. On-site child care services. (87, 97)

B-23. Homebound Instruction

The National Education Association believes that the diverse educational needs of all students must be met. Homebound students must have programs developed and maintained by state or local education entities. These programs must be implemented, documented, and monitored by licensed education professionals. The curriculum must be approved by the state education agency and be comparable to the classroom instruction. Such approved courses must be transferable as graduation requirements for the participants. (88)

B-24. Correspondence Programs

The National Education Association believes that state and local school correspondence programs that are funded by state or local school districts must be implemented by licensed educators. These alternative programs must use a curriculum approved by the state education agency. A student's progress must be documented and monitored by a licensed educator. Such approved courses must be transferable as graduation requirements for the participant. (88, 93)

B-25. Youth and Adult Training Programs

The National Education Association believes that the public schools should be involved as an equal partner with government, labor, business, agriculture, and community-based groups in youth and adult employment and training programs. The Association further believes that these programs should supplement, and not supplant, the vocational programs provided in the public schools.

The Association further believes that the use of funds for and duration of these programs should be flexible in order to accommodate the differing learning needs of students. The amount of funding should be predictable in order to facilitate year-to-year planning. These programs

should provide opportunities for women, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities in nontraditional occupations. (80, 91)

B-26. Education Through Service Learning and Community Service

The National Education Association believes that learning through voluntary community service should be encouraged as an integral part of a student's education. Participation by students in community service and service learning programs may be required for high school graduation or made available for elective credit. The Association also believes that school districts should work with community groups to provide students with the opportunity to participate in such programs.

Education employees who supervise students involved in these programs should be given appropriate compensation, planning time, program support, recognition, and time to evaluate the service and learning goals. Participation of education employees in such programs should be on a voluntary basis. (90, 97)

B-27. Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps

The National Education Association believes that the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs, which exist within the public schools, must meet all local and state educational standards and policies, including the employment of fully certified teaching personnel. Such programs shall be subject to and conform to the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement. Any programs that currently do not meet said conditions shall be brought into compliance. (97)

B-28. Multicultural Education

The National Education Association believes that multiculturalism is the process of valuing differences and incorporating the values identified into behavior for the goal of achieving the common good. The Association further believes that multicultural education is a way of helping students perceive the cultural diversity of U.S. citizenry so that they may develop pride in their own cultural legacy and awaken to the ideals embodied in the cultures of their neighbors.

The Association further believes that the goal of multicultural education is the recognition of individual and group differences and similarities in order to reduce racism, ethnic prejudices, and discrimination and to develop self-esteem as well as respect for others.

The Association believes that multicultural education encompasses at least three things: an idea or concept, an educational reform movement, and a process. As an idea or concept, multicultural education assumes that all students can learn. As an educational reform movement, multicultural education seeks to develop an entire school environment that is inclusive of cultural considerations (e.g., curriculum, instructional materials, learning and testing, respect for cultural differences, etc.). As a process, the development of a multicultural school environ-ment is ever evolving and ongoing.

The Association urges its affiliates to develop comprehensive educator training programs for multicultural education and to work to secure legislation that would provide adequate funding for effective implementation of such programs. (81, 95)

B-29. Global Education

The National Education Association believes that global education increases respect for and awareness of the earth and its people. Global education imparts information about cultures and an appreciation of our interdependency in sharing the world's resources to meet mutual human needs.

The Association further believes that curriculum and instruction about regional and international conflicts must present a balanced view, include historical context, and demonstrate relevancy and sensitivity to all people. The achievement of this goal requires the mastery of global communication and development of an appreciation of the common humanity shared by all peoples.

The Association believes that the goal of appreciation of and harmony with our global neighbors depends on a national commitment to strengthening the capability of the educational system to teach American children about the world. The Association believes that this goal can be achieved through positive multicultural language and global education programs that are funded and include teacher involvement and training. (95)

B-30. Foreign/World Language Education

The National Education Association believes that foreign/world language instruction is a vital part of the total educational process. Students must be offered the opportunity to learn other languages early in their educational experience.

The Association supports the maintenance of current programs and the further encouragement and development of foreign/world language instruction and international studies at all educational levels.

The Association recognizes the need for teacher training programs for foreign/world language teachers and supports teacher and student exchange programs. (81, 97)

B-31. Career Education

The National Education Association believes that a goal of public education is to provide all individuals, preschool through adulthood, opportunities to become effective, productive citizens. To achieve this goal, the career education concept must be interwoven into the total educational system and needs to include programs in gender-free career awareness and exploration to aid students in career course selection.

The Association believes that educational programs for all students should be developed that will enhance self-esteem, will assure equal opportunity for career development, and will offer exploratory experiences in a variety of careers, including small business management and self-employment. The Association and its affiliates should be encouraged to provide professional development experiences and released time for teachers for curriculum development in this area and should cooperate with industry and agencies in full support of career education programs. (76, 92)

B-32. Vocational Education

The National Education Association believes that preparation of students for vocations and productive jobs should be a responsibility of secondary and higher education. Educational programs that assure equal opportunity for occupational development and encourage students to consider nontraditional vocations should be developed for all students at all levels. A continuing comprehensive program for training, retraining, advancement, and promotion should be provided for students who have completed minimal state attendance requirements.

The Association supports vocational and technical education as a major component of education and advocates that every student have the opportunity to enroll in such classes without restrictions. To be effective, vocational and technical education should be preceded by career awareness and exploration programs. These exploratory courses should be coordinated with traditionally academic courses and industrial and practical arts education courses. These academic programs and industrial programs should be combined, when appropriate, with cooperative efforts on the part of educators and industrial and business leaders to provide school-to-work experiences for students.

The Association believes that adequate resources must be provided to maintain, enhance, and expand quality vocational education programs, prepare students for a high-technology environment, and purchase up-to-date equipment. The Association further believes that the involvement of education employees, private sector employment and training program personnel, and the business community is essential to the development of vocational education programs. (76, 96)

B-33. Fine Arts Education

The National Education Association believes that artistic expression is basic to an individual's intellectual, aesthetic, and emotional development. The Association also believes that fine arts transcend cultural barriers, foster multicultural understanding, and enhance critical thinking skills. The Association, therefore, believes that every elementary and secondary school curriculum must include a balanced, comprehensive, and sequential program of fine arts instruction for all students taught by a licensed specialist in a facility or room designed and equipped for that purpose. Resources must be provided to maintain and upgrade materials and provide for emerging technologies.

The Association urges its state affiliates to become involved in the promotion, expansion, and implementation of an academic fine arts program in the curriculum. (80, 96)

B-34. Physical Education

The National Education Association believes that physical activity and exercise are essential for good health and must be encouraged during the developmental years of students. The Association further believes that a comprehensive program of physical education should be provided daily in grades pre-K through 12 in or on facilities designed for that purpose.

The Association believes that the following concepts should be included —

a. Curriculum emphasis should cover physical fitness; skills of sports, games, dance, and basic movement; and related concepts and knowledge.
b. Student assessments should include physical fitness testing at least twice a year as a culmination of preparatory activities.
c. Every student should have posture checks and other health screenings with follow-up activities provided.

d. Programs should include appropriate provisions for the special needs of students with low fitness, physical disabilities, or learning disabilities.
e. Teachers of physical education should have appropriate professional preparation in physical education as well as periodic professional growth training.

The Association further believes that physical education programs should be developmental, sequential, cooperative in nature, and culturally sensitive. (91, 93)

B-35. Family Life Education

The National Education Association recognizes the myriad family structures of our society and the impact of these family structures and other close personal relationships on the quality of individual lives and upon society. The Association further recognizes the importance of education in the maintenance and promotion of stable, functional, healthy families and the emotional, physical, and mental health of people within these families.

The Association believes that programs should be established for both students and parents and supported at all educational levels to promote —

a. The development of self-esteem and positive self-concept in individuals of all ages in various family roles
b. Learning and practicing positive interpersonal communication skills and conflict resolution
c. Education in human growth and development
d. Positive parenting techniques that include strategies to deal effectively with violent behavior
e. An understanding of societal issues and problems related to children, spouses, parents, older generation family members, and other family members.

The Association believes that education in these areas must be presented as part of an anti- biased, culturally-sensitive program. (94, 96)

B-36. Sex Education

The National Education Association believes that the developing child's sexuality is continually and inevitably influenced by daily contacts, including experiences in the school environment. The Association recognizes that sensitive sex education can be a positive force in promoting physical, mental, emotional, and social health and that the public school must assume an increasingly important role in providing the instruction. Teachers and health professionals must be qualified to teach in this area and must be legally protected from censorship and lawsuits.

The Association urges that formal sex education should include parent orientation and be planned and implemented with careful attention to developmental needs, appropriateness to community settings and values, and respect for individual differences.

The Association urges its affiliates and members to support appropriately established sex education programs, including information on decision-making and refusal skills, sexual abstinence, birth control and family planning, diversity of culture, diversity of sexual orientation, parenting skills, prenatal care, sexually transmitted diseases, incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, the effects of substance abuse during pregnancy, and problems associated with and resulting from preteen and teenage pregnancies.

To facilitate the realization of human potential, it is the right of every individual to live in an environment of freely available information, knowledge, and wisdom about sexuality. (69, 97)

B-37. AIDS Education

The National Education Association recommends that educational institutions establish comprehensive acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) education programs as an integral part of the school curriculum. AIDS education must include education about all means of transmission, including sex and intravenous (IV) drug use. Information on prevention options must include abstinence and medically accepted protective devices. Instruction in decision-making skills to assist students in correlating health information and personal behavior is essential.

The Association believes that proper implementation of these programs requires education employee training and input. The Association further believes that these programs should be presented by properly licensed/trained personnel and should be planned with the input of parents and other community representatives. (87, 93)

B-38. Lifesaving Techniques

The National Education Association believes that education employees and students should be trained in basic emergency lifesaving techniques. Such training should be included in both school curriculum and staff development. (82, 96)

B-39. Environmental Education

The National Education Association believes that the nation's priorities must include the protection of our environment. The Association urges the establishment and maintenance of Federal Wilderness Areas, Recreational Areas, Refuge Areas, and designated local green areas. The Association further urges the development and improvement of educational programs that will —

a. Promote the concept of the interdependence of humanity and nature
b. Develop an awareness of the effects of past, present, and future population growth patterns on world civilization, human survival, and the environment
c. Promote an understanding of the necessity to protect endangered, threatened, and rare species
d. Promote an understanding of the necessity to protect the earth's finite resources
e. Promote the concept of pollution reduction
f. Promote the use of reusable and recyclable products and discourage the use of disposable products
g. Promote the use of disposal methods that do not contaminate the environment
h. Promote the recognition of and participation in Earth Day activities
i. Promote the understanding of the value of the world's ecosystems.

The Association urges its affiliates to support environmental programs in school systems and educational institutions and supports legislation and local policies that ensure a safe and healthy environment. (73, 97)

B-40. Arbor Day Education

The National Education Association believes that Arbor Day should be appropriately observed each year in every state. The Association urges its state and local affiliates to encourage their governors and mayors to declare the appropriate day each year as Arbor Day. Appropriate activities such as essay contests and tree plantings should be a part of this observation in each school. (88, 94)

B-41. Atmospheric Pollution

The National Education Association believes that atmospheric changes caused by human activities pose a significant environmental threat.

The Association urges the development of educational programs that explore the causes and effects of atmospheric problems such as global warming, ozone depletion, and acid precipitation and deposition, and possible solutions to such problems. (89, 95)

B-42. Energy Education

The National Education Association believes that educational programs should increase understanding of energy, alternative energy sources, and energy conservation.

The Association urges its affiliates to support a National Energy Education Day and to encourage energy education programs at all levels. (85, 96)

B-43. Democracy and Citizenship Education

The National Education Association believes that democratic ideals should be practiced as part of the total education process. The Association further believes that the following concepts should be an integral part of the curriculum within public schools and other educational institutions:

a. The dignity and worth of the individual
b. Due process of law
c. Rule of the majority tempered by respect for minority rights
d. Individual responsibility
e. Equal justice under the law
f. Civil liberties as guarantors of individual rights
g. One-person — one-vote
h. Active citizen participation in all aspects of public affairs.

The Association encourages teachers, lawyers, court personnel, and others to work together to develop appropriate materials, including information about the justice system and constitutional issues, in order to teach students to be responsible citizens. (84, 96)

B-44. Labor Movement Education

The National Education Association believes that the struggles of working men and women to establish unions and the influence of the labor movement on the growth of the United States should be an integral part of the curriculum in our schools.

The Association urges teachers, curriculum committees, and authors to include material that accurately presents the important contributions to our country's history and growth that have been provided

by the unions involved in the labor movement and the individuals who led that movement. (88, 96)

B-45. Metric System

The National Education Association believes in the adoption of the International System of Units (SI metric system). The Association advocates that the SI system be taught at all educational levels. (69, 96)

B-46. Accurate United States Maps

The National Education Association believes that all visual representations using maps of the United States should depict all fifty states and Puerto Rico in their correct geographic location and relative size. (95)

B-47. Driver Education

The National Education Association believes that fully funded classroom and behind-the-wheel driver education courses taught by a certified teacher should be part of the basic education of all students.

The Association urges its affiliates to support legislation that requires these courses in the curriculum. (80, 86)

B-48. Education on Peace and the Dangers of Nuclear Proliferation

The National Education Association believes that age-appropriate instructional materials on the establishment of peace and the understanding of nuclear proliferation need to be developed. These materials should include activities dealing with peaceful resolution of conflict, the effects of nuclear weaponry, strategies for disarmament, and methods to achieve peace.

The Association believes that the United States and the world need to take a stand for peace and international understanding. The development of educational programs is a first step in that direction. (82, 97)

B-49. Genocide

The National Education Association deplores any act of genocide, defined as "the deliberate and systematic eradication of a racial, political, cultural, or religious group." Acts of genocide must be acknowledged and taught so as to prevent their occurrence and preclude their recurrence. Curricula should include the historical context of all known acts of genocide in order to provide insight into how such inhumanity develops. (93, 96)

B-50. The Holocaust

The National Education Association believes that a way to prevent events that have caused great human misery, such as the Holocaust, is to teach all students about the Holocaust not only as an historical event but also as a means of providing insight into how inhumanity of this magnitude develops. The Holocaust must be taught so that never again can doubt of its occurrence be raised and never again can like action occur. (81, 93)

B-51. Homework

The National Education Association supports the assignment of homework as one means of reinforcing and furthering classroom instruction and learning.

The Association believes that the type and the amount of homework assigned should be determined by the classroom teacher and be appropriate to a student's developmental level. (85, 90)

B-52. Discipline

The National Education Association believes that a safe and orderly environment, in which students are treated with dignity, will provide them with a positive learning experience. Effective disciplinary procedures enhance high expectations and quality instruction, thereby promoting self- control and responsible behavior in students while ensuring the right of all students to due process and an orderly learning environment.

The Association promotes the study, development, and funding of a variety of effective discipline procedures. The Association believes that its local affiliates, in conjunction with other stakeholders, should develop guidelines for effective disciplinary techniques. Further, the Association believes that governing boards, in conjunction with local affiliates, parents/guardians, students, staff, and community members, should develop policies and standards that provide the necessary administrative support to education employees for the maintenance of a positive, safe school environment.

The Association condemns the misuse of discipline as a means of excluding students from the school setting until other methods of behavioral intervention have been exhausted. This does not preclude the removal of the offender from the school setting to protect other students and education employees. The Association also believes that disruptive students should not be placed in vocational, technical, unified arts, or special education classes solely for the purpose of solving disciplinary problems. The Association further believes that corporal punishment should not be used as a means of disciplining students. (75, 96)

B-53. Conflict Resolution Education

The National Education Association supports the use of proven conflict-resolution strategies, instructional materials, and activities in the curriculum, for classroom procedures, on the playground, and at school-sponsored extracurricular activities to encourage nonviolent resolution of interpersonal and societal conflicts.

The Association encourages the development of programs to train education employees in methods of nonviolent conflict resolution. In addition, the Association recommends the use of conflict resolution processes to resolve disputes and disagreements between and among all education employees so that they can model these processes. (86, 97)

B-54. Standards for Student Learning

The National Education Association believes in high standards which describe clear expectations for what students should know and be able to do. Throughout the implementation of content and performance standards, all students must be provided the instructional opportunities and learning conditions necessary to attain the standards. The Association supports the development and use of assessment systems that are related to the standards. These assessment systems should be regularly reviewed to assure validity and usefulness.

The Association further believes that state and local affiliates must participate in the planning, development, implementation, and refinement of standards, conditions, and assessments to ensure that—

a. Parents, community members, students, and school personnel are involved
b. Full funding and adequate resources are provided throughout the process
c. Assessment systems enable teachers to evaluate each student's progress toward attaining standards
d. Appropriate attention is given to the needs and developmental levels of each student
e. Ongoing professional development is provided for teachers and educational support personnel
f. Students, parents, school personnel, community members, and governments share the accountability. (97)

B-55. Standardized Testing of Students

The National Education Association believes that standardized tests should only be used to improve the quality of education and instruction for students. Standardized tests are most useful when selected by educational professionals closest to the classroom and integrated with assessment information specific to local programs. Affiliates should advocate the design and use of a variety of developmentally appropriate assessment techniques that are bias-free, reliable, and valid. When a test is mandated at the state or national level, it should only be used to evaluate programs toward meeting state or national standards and/or goals.

The Association opposes the use of standardized tests when—

a. Used as the criterion for the reduction or withholding of any educational funding
b. They inappropriately compare students, teachers, programs, schools, communities, and states
c. Used as a single criterion for high-stakes decision making
d. They do not match the developmental levels or language proficiency of the student
e. Student scores are used to evaluate teachers or to determine compensation or employment status
f. Programs are specifically designed to teach to the test.

The administration of a standardized test includes the responsibility to educate the stakeholders in the purpose of the test, the meaning of test results, and the accurate interpretation of conclusions. (78, 97)

B-56. Student Assessment Programs in Higher Education

The National Education Association believes that student assessment programs in higher education, properly designed and administered, can be crucial tools for diagnosing student and institutional needs, improving instruction and counseling services, and designing long-range plans. The Association believes that such student assessment programs in higher education should —

a. Be designed institutionally rather than by the state
b. Be planned, designed, implemented, and evaluated by faculty
c. Be implemented in accordance with collective bargaining con-

tracts where such contracts exist
d. Be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the cultural, economic, and linguistic diversity among students
e. Provide tests appropriate for students with identified learning disabilities
f. Provide faculty with information to improve individual student learning styles and aptitude.

The Association supports student assessment programs in higher education only if —
a. They are accompanied by adequate funding for remedial programs and advisement
b. Remedial programs are designed and provided to meet the deficiencies identified through assessment
c. Advisement is designed and provided to link the remediation of individual students to the completion of their degree, certificates, or other appropriate courses of study.

The Association strongly opposes —
a. The use of student assessment programs to deny access to, or exclude students from, educational opportunities
b. The use of any single test to deny access to regular credit classes
c. The use of student assessment programs for the purpose of evaluating faculty, academic programs, or institutions. (95, 97)

B-57. School Libraries/Media Programs

The National Education Association believes every student must have a comprehensive library/media program within his or her educational setting. This program should include printed and nonprinted resource materials, instruction in library research and information skills, necessary technology, certificated librarians/media specialists, and educational support personnel. (80, 92)

B-58. Information Literacy

The National Education Association believes that equity must be assured as public education works to meet the critical need to prepare all students to become information-literate adults and responsible citizens.

The Association encourages federal funding specific to library/media programs, increased funding from state and local government sources, and public/private partnership funding to stimulate and support the efficient use of existing and emerging technologies and to provide for equity and freedom of access to information unimpeded by geographic, economic, social, or cultural constraints. (92, 94)

B-59. Media

The National Education Association recognizes the fact that the media have an effect on the education of the public. Therefore, the Association believes that the media have an obligation to provide full, constructive, balanced, and accurate presentations to the public. The Association supports the media's right to protect information and sources of information from mandated disclosures and search and seizure. Visual media, including the Association's, should include closed captioning for the hearing impaired and read-along captions on children's commercial and educational programs. (69, 97)

B-60. Technology in the Educational Process

The National Education Association believes that technology in the educational process improves the learning opportunities for students, improves the quality of instruction, and improves the effectiveness of educational exmployees. Technology can provide opportunities to reduce educational inequities.

The Association supports increased federal, state, and local resources, along with public/private partnerships, to fully fund equipment purchases/upgrades, maintenance, technical support, training, evaluation, and staffing to support the full use of technology in public schools.

The Association believes that —
a. Education employees must have access to necessary technology for managing and advancing instruction. Such technology must be compatible with and on at least the same level as technology in general use outside education. Further, education employees should be provided encouragement, time, and resources to experiment with and to research applications of technology in order to integrate technology into the curriculum.
b. Education employees, including representatives of the local association, must be involved in all aspects of technology utilization, including planning, materials selection, implementation, and evaluation. Additional preparation time and ongoing technological support must be granted to teachers using technology to enrich their regular programs. Further, classroom teachers and library/media specialists must have collaborative planning time to develop programs.
c. Ongoing training must be provided for education employees in the use of technologies and applications.
d. Teacher preparation in instructional technology, including the development of effective materials, and appropriate instructional strategies must begin in college and university programs and extend through continuing professional development.
e. Students must have access to and instruction in technology and the responsible use of technology. Further, there must be equity in training, funding, and participation for all students.
f. Instructional technology should be used to support instruction and must be directed by a licensed teacher.
g. Instructional technology should be used to support instruction, but no reduction of positions, hours, or compensation should occur as a direct or indirect result of any technological programs.
h. The evaluation of education employees in any technological program should be conducted openly and meet the requirements of the local collective bargaining agreement or evaluation policy. (81, 97)

B-61. Telecommunications Technology

The National Education Association believes that every classroom and school library/media center should have equal access to the resources necessary to make full use of telecommunications, including the National Information Infrastructure (NII). Students, education employees, and educational institutions should be provided a toll-free seamless connection to all telecommunications networks with access to the education community and the information resources that lie outside in the broader community. Access to broadband networks capable of carrying video, audio, and data is needed to permit groups of students, educators, and other individuals to collaborate on joint projects in any medium they choose.

The Association supports the development of a user-friendly infrastructure which can accommodate a decentralized approach to program and product development so that the interaction among educators, students, researchers, and those outside the educational community can occur. The infrastructure should be operated under voluntary standards that promote interoperability and that support user collaboration. Adequate measures to protect the security of resources on the network should be put in place. Further, comprehensive directories of information resources and navigation systems for locating these resources should be developed and maintained.

The Association believes that education employees are essential to the success of telecommunications projects and their perspective, insights, support, and commitment are vital for successful implementation. The impact of telecommunications and distance learning on education employees should be subject to local collective bargaining agreements.

The Association believes telecommunications can enhance learning opportunities for students, reduce educational inequities within and among educational institutions, and serve as an effective tool for staff development. Telecommunications should be used to support the development of critical thinking and collaboration skills. (93, 95)

B-62. Interactive Distance Learning

The National Education Association believes that distance learning can create or extend learning opportunities not otherwise available to all students.

The Association also believes that courses offered by public schools utilizing live interactive distance learning should be developed and must be instructed by a licensed teacher. Receiving sites must have a qualified educational employee responsible for classroom management. Training for instructing in interactive distance learning environments is essential.

The Association further believes that class size should be determined by combining the number of students in all sites. Class size should conform to district policy of the instructing teacher and cannot exceed limits set by state statute.

In addition, the Association believes that interactive distance learning should not be used to reduce the number of teachers employed by individual school districts. (97)

B-63. Communication Between the Hearing and the Hearing Impaired

The National Education Association believes that the lack of communications between the hearing and the hearing impaired has detracted from the potential of a broadly distributed group to contribute fully to our total society.

The Association recommends that instruction be given to hearing students that will help them understand the unique needs of all hearing-impaired students and will help hearing students communicate with hearing-impaired students.

The Association further believes that the American Sign Language (ASL) should be offered as a foreign/world language elective credit at both high school and college levels. (74, 97)

B-64. Credit-Hour Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that the different methods of assigning credit hours as used by the nation's colleges and universities often cause difficulties in the evaluation of transcripts. The Association therefore urges the nation's colleges and universities to develop, in cooperation with the Association, a uniform formula to evaluate credit hours. (77, 86)

B-65. Transfer of Student Records

The National Education Association supports the development of an effective process for the transfer of student records. This process must expedite confidential informational exchanges between schools when students transfer, protect the rights of students, and facilitate the continuity of their education.

The Association believes that the school and education employees who receive students with known serious behavior problems or violence-related potential shall be immediately informed of the violence potential of those students. (80, 97)

B-66. Classroom Use of Animals

The National Education Association believes that educators at all levels should implement guidelines concerning the humane use of animals in the classroom.

The Association urges that teachers encourage compassion and respect for all living things. (89)

B-67. Home Schooling

The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience.

The Association believes that if parental preference home schooling study occurs, students enrolled must meet all state requirements. Instruction should be by persons who are licensed by the appropriate state education licensure agency, and a curriculum approved by the state department of education should be used.

The Association believes that local public school systems should have the authority to determine grade placement and/or credits earned toward graduation for students entering or re-entering the public school setting from a home school setting.

The Association further believes that such home schooling programs should be limited to the children of the immediate family, with all expenses being borne by the parents. (88, 94)

C. PROMOTE THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND/OR STUDENTS

C-1. Health Care for All Children

The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health care.

The Association also believes that such health care should be provided by properly licensed physicians and by other properly licensed health professionals.

The Association further believes that legislation should be adopted to provide comprehensive health care to all children. (90, 97)

C-2. Nutrition

The National Education Association believes that proper nutrition is essential to child development and student success. The Association further believes that proper nutrition must be a part of prenatal care and must continue throughout life.

The Association supports programs within the education framework that promote understanding of proper nutrition. In addition, the Association advocates efforts to develop uniform symbols that make clear to consumers which food choices promote good nutrition.

The Association believes school food service programs must be nutritionally sound, appealing, and affordable. The Association also supports nutrition programs that are regulated by uniform standards, readily accessible, and are supported by public funds.

The Association further believes that changes in the way public funds are allocated for school food service programs must maintain quality and appropriate levels of service as well as support additional funding, given projected increases in population and need. (90, 97)

C-3. Substance Abuse

The National Education Association opposes drug abuse, including alcohol and tobacco dependency.

The Association supports —

a. Standardization of drug laws, including the sale and distribution of drugs
b. Prohibition of the production, sale, and distribution of drug paraphernalia
c. Improvement of drug prevention and rehabilitation programs
d. Mandated drug rehabilitation programs for any violation or conviction, whether civil or criminal, resulting from the possession or use of a controlled substance
e. Research on the genetic and neurological damage done to children through parental substance abuse and the impact on student learning and behavior
f. Appropriate educational experiences to educate students about the serious consequences of participating in any aspect of the illegal drug trade.

The Association opposes the illegal use of drugs and substances and believes that severe penalties for illegal production, distribution, and sale should be strictly enforced.

The Association supports strict enforcement of the legal drinking age and the laws governing the sale of alcoholic beverages in each state and supports federal legislation to establish a uniform legal drinking age of 21.

The Association supports strict enforcement of laws governing the sale of tobacco products and believes that federal legislation should be established to create a uniform age of 18 for purchase, possession, or use of tobacco products. (72, 97)

C-4. Tobacco Products

The National Education Association believes that educators should play a key role in nationwide efforts to educate young people about the dangers of tobacco use and second-hand smoke.

The Association also believes that all governmental promotion of, subsidies for, and involvement in production and distribution of tobacco products should cease.

The Association further believes that the following changes in the law should occur:

a. All places of public accommodation should be smoke-free.
b. All advertising of tobacco products beyond packaging should be banned.
c. Taxes on tobacco products should be increased. (94)

C-5. Family Stability for Children

The National Education Association believes that it is in the best interest of all children to live in a secure and stable family environment. Every effort should be made to provide a family with the supportive services it needs to allow it to stay together and care for the child in a safe, nonabusive, and nurturing environment.

In the case of custodial and non-custodial parents, the Association recognizes the vital role both parents can play in the development of their children. The Association encourages the judicial system to recognize the crucial role both parents can play in that development when legally appropriate.

If a child's immediate family and/or extended family is unable to care for him or her, the Association believes that the child may need temporary foster care while, at the same time, efforts are made to work with the family toward reunification with the child.

The Association also believes that parents who place children in foster care must be accountable for their efforts to rehabilitate themselves and indicate, through their actions, that they are working toward the return of the child to the home.

The Association further believes that, if it becomes clear that a family is not able to make a home for a child and is unable to resume parenting, efforts should be made for the legal release of the child for adoption. (84, 96)

C-6. Dependent Children of Military Personnel

The National Education Association believes that parents serving in the military should have adequate services provided to ensure that their dependent children are cared for and an uninterrupted education is provided in the event of the parent's/parents' mobilization. (91, 96)

C-7. Child Care

The National Education Association believes that all child care centers should have adequate facilities, proper supervision, appropriate education programs, and qualified, screened, and trained personnel. Child care centers should be examined and monitored on a continuous basis, and additional legislation should be sought as necessary to maintain the highest quality child care.

The Association encourages school districts and educational institutions to establish on-site child care for preschoolers, students, the children of students, and the children of staff members. (84, 95)

C-8. Family/Domestic Violence

The National Education Association condemns any form of family/domestic violence and the tolerance thereof and believes the cycle of violence has a detrimental effect on students' well-being. School districts and communities should provide preventive training and educational programs for education employees, students, and parents/guardians. The Association supports adequate funding and staffing of existing family services and the creation of additional support systems and shelters.

The Association also believes social services and the criminal justice system should continue to intervene actively in the cycle of family/domestic violence. (78, 97)

C-9. Standards for Family/Domestic Crisis Care

The National Education Association supports a full range of assistance from interventions to shelters for families experiencing domestic violence.

The Association advocates:

a. Services that include protection, counseling, and therapy for these children and families
b. Adequate financial support
c. Screening and training of potential foster families and shelter personnel
d. Immediate temporary foster care for children who are being abused, neglected, or exploited
e. Continued training, supervision, and evaluation of foster families and shelter personnel
f. Appropriate ongoing communications of pertinent information between social service agencies and school personnel
g. Mandated counseling for persons committing physical and/or psychological violence. (92, 95)

C-10. Child Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

The National Education Association believes that all children should be protected from the psychological and physical aspects of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The Association urges its affiliates to —

a. Seek clear legal definitions of what constitutes child abuse, neglect, and exploitation
b. Encourage the development of educator preparation courses and employee awareness programs which stress the identification of, reporting procedures for, legal responsibilities for, and techniques for dealing with abused, neglected, and exploited children
c. Cooperate with community organizations to increase public awareness and understanding of the prevalence as well as the causes, prevention, and treatment of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation
d. Encourage the development and use of materials to increase student awareness of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation
e. Require school personnel to report to appropriate authorities instances of suspected child abuse, neglect, and exploitation while providing school personnel with immunity from legal action
f. Encourage development of legislatively funded provisions for dealing with the abusive child, adult, or institution as well as processes, protective options, and coping provisions for the abused, neglected, and exploited child
g. Encourage enactment of legislation for protection of children from parents/guardians who demonstrate neglect by leaving them unattended/unsupervised
h. Encourage positive action from the marketing and media professions in eliminating exploitation, commercialization, and glamorization of physical, emotional, and sexual child abuse. (74, 93)

C-11. Out-of-Home Placement of Juveniles

The National Education Association believes that when juveniles are removed from the home by the juvenile justice system either for their own protection or for the commission of a status offense and are placed in the custody of group foster homes or other custodial facilities, the rights of both the juvenile and the community must be protected. These facilities must be licensed, be operated by trained and licensed personnel, meet appropriate health and safety codes, and provide counseling and ancillary services for the juvenile, and be nonprofit.

The impact of facilities on the public schools should be taken into account by licensing agencies and zoning authorities.

The Association further believes that the school and educators who receive students with known serious behavior problems or violence-related potential shall be immediately informed of the violence potential of those students. (92, 94)

C-12. Protection of Infants with Disabilities

The National Education Association believes that infants born with mentally and/or physically disabling conditions are entitled to receive reasonable medical care. (85, 93)

C-13. Child Support Payments

The National Education Association supports efforts of parents and local, state, and federal agencies to establish and enforce adequate child support guidelines and to improve the effectiveness of collecting court-designated child support. (83, 93)

C-14. Extremist Groups

The National Education Association condemns the philosophy and practices of extremist groups and their efforts to recruit young people and urges active opposition to all such movements that are inimical to the ideals of the Association. (80, 93)

C-15. Telephone/Telemarketing Programs

The National Education Association believes that children should be protected from exploitive telephone and telemarketing programs and that electronic blocking devices should be available at no cost. (89, 96)

C-16. School Facilities: Design, Construction, and Function

The National Education Association believes that all school facilities must be well constructed, energy-efficient, aesthetically pleasing, accessible, functional, and adaptable to persons with disabilities. The physical environment must allow for a variety of needs, including the number of students, physical characteristics of students, changes in teaching methods, presentation of instruction, and an increased use of school facilities.

The Association also believes that the community, parents, teachers, and educational support personnel must be involved through site-based, shared decision making in designing these facilities. Construction designs should incorporate original art.

The Association further believes that stable and sufficient funding must be provided for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of the school facility. (92, 97)

C-17. Safe School Environment

The National Education Association believes that all educational facilities must be smoke-free and safe from environmental and chemical hazards.

School districts should conduct periodic testing for harmful water and airborne particles/agents which are detrimental to the health of students and educational employees.

The Association also believes in the establishment and enforcement of standards of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to ensure health and safety.

The Association supports ongoing training and certification of education employees who work in potentially hazardous situations. This training must include proper handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and instruction on Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).

Additional health hazards should not be created when facilities are altered or repaired.

The Association further believes that school districts must post MSDS and OSHA standards. Students and/or their guardians, school employees, and the public should be notified of actual and potential hazards. All stakeholders should be involved in developing a plan for corrective action. (89, 97)

C-18. Programs Before and After School

The National Education Association believes that all children need adequate and appropriate adult supervision and guidance before and after school hours.

The Association believes that children who have limited or no adult supervision before or after school need local, state, and/or national programs, developed and staffed by qualified and trained personnel, which include opportunities to participate in study-skill sessions, counseling, and guidance in addition to recreational activities. (83, 95)

C-19. Prevention of Child Abduction

The National Education Association believes that all children should be protected from abduction. Programs to prevent abduction should be provided to education employees, students, parents/guardians, and the community. School districts should have policies and procedures for the prevention of abduction. (84, 97)

C-20. Missing Children

The National Education Association believes that all available means must be utilized to locate missing children. The Association also believes that local and state affiliates should work cooperatively with local programs and/or authorities to raise the public's conscious-

ness about the missing-children crisis.

The Association further believes that the voluntary fingerprinting of children should be conducted in a nonthreatening environment and that completed fingerprint cards should be given to the parent or guardian. (81, 97)

C-21. School Transportation

The National Education Association believes that free transportation should be provided for all public school students residing beyond a reasonable and safe walking distance from their assigned schools. The Association also believes that local school districts should provide students with transportation for all school-related activities.

The Association further believes in safe and orderly transportation of students. Rules, regulations, and procedures must be developed, enforced, and constantly reviewed and revised to ensure it. School bus personnel should be utilized to transport students at all times. (77, 96)

C-22. Comprehensive School Health Programs and Services

The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs and services. Such programs and services must be interactive and coordinated within and between school, home, and community settings. School and community efforts must also be integrated to promote the well-being of children and youth and to build support for school and community health programs.

The Association believes that schools should provide —

a. A healthful psychological climate and a safe physical environment
b. Food services that provide nutritious meals and support sound nutrition education that helps students to select nutritionally appropriate foods.

The Association also believes that programs in the schools should provide —

a. A planned, sequential, pre-K through 12 health education curriculum that integrates various health topics (such as drug abuse, violence, universal precautions, and HIV education); that is taught by teachers specifically prepared to teach the subject; and that enables students to develop the essential knowledge and skills to maintain personal, family, and community health
b. A planned, sequential, pre-K through 12 physical education curriculum that encourages students to achieve optimum physical fitness and promotes a consistent active life-style; that offers opportunities for self-expression and social development; that fosters stress reduction; and that is taught by teachers trained in the field
c. Worksite health promotion to improve the health status of school staff to set an example for desired student behaviors.

The Association believes that services in the schools should include —

a. Counseling programs that provide developmental guidance and broad-based interventions and referrals that promote the physical and psychological health of students
b. Services that identify, diagnose, and resolve learning disabilities
c. Health services provided by a licensed professional school nurse that promote the health of students through prevention, case finding, early intervention, and remediation of specific health problems, that provide first aid and triage of illness and injuries, and that provide health counseling
d. A nurse-to-student ratio at each site that is appropriate to provide quality school health care
e. Comprehensive school-based, community-funded student health care clinics that provide basic health care services (which may include diagnosis and treatment) to supplement school nurses
f. If deemed appropriate by local choice, family-planning counseling and access to birth control methods with instruction in their use
g. Coordination with community agencies for support and follow-up activities.

The Association believes that all services available to students must be provided by appropriately licensed and certificated professional personnel. The Association further believes that education employees, parents, students, and personnel from community agencies providing services to students must be involved in the development, implementation, and coordination of services.

The Association urges its affiliates to support legislation to provide comprehensive care to all children and supports community, state, and national efforts to coordinate services. (69, 97)

C-23. School Counseling Programs

The National Education Association believes that guidance and counseling programs should be integrated into the entire education system and that such programs should be provided through counselor/student ratios that best support students in realizing their full potential in all areas of growth and achievement. (87, 97)

C-24. Student Stress and Anger

The National Education Association believes there are increasing mental, emotional, and environmental pressures upon children and youth which result in drug and alcohol abuse, violence, vandalism, school dropouts, and suicide.

The Association also believes stress and anger management programs, including follow-up support, that address the needs of children within both school and community settings should be provided. Workshops to prepare education employees and parents/guardians are necessary to help students deal with stress and anger. (80, 96)

C-25. Effective School Climate

The National Education Association believes that an effective school climate is necessary for promoting educational excellence in public schools. An effective school has a positive environment in which education employees, students, and parents/guardians communicate with, care for, respect, and trust each other and in which the school as an institution cares for, respects, trusts, and fosters an understanding among the people in it.

The Association also believes that education employees and students should be protected from all forms of harassment. Appropriate education must be given and timely action must be taken to ensure that harassment does not recur.

The Association further believes that due process must be guaranteed to all individuals accused of harassment. (87, 97)

C-26. Discipline, Order, and Safety Required for Learning

The National Education Association believes that discipline, order, and safety are essential for an environment conducive to learning. A concerted effort among education employees, parents/guardians, students, administrators, community members, and school governing boards is necessary to achieve safe, orderly schools. The Association therefore believes that the following guidelines must be followed in the schools:

a. Students should be empowered with strategies and skills, including conflict resolution, that will develop tolerance, self-discipline, and self-control. Students should be taught to distinguish between their own rights and responsibilities and the rights and responsibilities of others.
b. An orderly environment, including infrastructure, for students and education employees must be established on the basis of rational methods and procedures to promote school activities and behaviors that enhance teaching and learning.
c. A truly safe school setting must extend beyond freedom from danger to freedom from fear of danger, which inhibits both teaching and learning as well as participation in school and community activities.

The Association further believes that all education employees should receive formal, extensive, and ongoing training in strategies which promote discipline, order, and safety in both school and school-related activities. (94, 96)

C-27. Support and Training for Parents/Guardians of Disruptive Students

The National Education Association believes that appropriate school behavior begins and is reinforced in the home. Parents/guardians of children who are disruptive often need support and training in order to reduce negative behavior and increase student learning. Programs that provide assistance and training in child development, effective parenting skills, and strategies for dealing with disruptive students should be available for parents/guardians. Schools can be instrumental in identifying and recommending strategies that can assist parents/guardians. (96)

C-28. Nonviolence in Schools

The National Education Association believes that school employees and students should be safe from physical, verbal, and psychological violence. The Association also believes that schools should provide appropriate services within the regular education program or develop appropriate alternative education placement programs for students who are dangerous to other students and education employees.

Students must receive due process before placement in an alternative program.

The Association further believes that the appropriate agencies should use their authority to prevent violence in schools and in society. (86, 97)

C-29. Student Sexual Orientation

The National Education Association believes that all persons,

regardless of sexual orientation, should be afforded equal opportunity within the public education system. The Association further believes that, for students who are struggling with their sexual/gender orientation, every school district and educational institution should provide counseling services and programs that deal with high suicide and dropout rates and the high incidence of teen prostitution. These services and programs shall be staffed by trained personnel. (88, 97)

C-30. Placement of Students with HIV/AIDS

The National Education Association supports establishing local policy that ensures a free, appropriate public education in a least-restrictive environment for all students infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

The Association believes that the placement of such students in school is a medical decision that should be made on a case-by-case basis by qualified health care professionals.

The Association further believes that students should not be refused admittance to school or subjected to any other adverse action solely because they have tested positive for HIV or have been diagnosed as having AIDS. (87, 93)

C-31. Suicide Prevention Programs

The National Education Association believes that suicide prevention programs including prevention, intervention, and postvention must be developed and implemented. The Association urges its affiliates to ensure that these programs are an integral part of the school program. (89, 92)

C-32. Youth Camp Safety

The National Education Association believes that all youth camps must provide proper supervision and instruction as well as secure facilities that meet current safety and health standards.

The Association urges its members to support legislation establishing guidelines that require that all camp personnel be qualified and trained for their areas of responsibility. (76, 87)

C-33. Student Rights and Responsibilities

The National Education Association believes that basic student rights include the right to free inquiry and expression; due process; gender equity; freedom of association; freedom of peaceful assembly and petition; participation in the governance of the school, college, and university; freedom from discrimination; freedom from commercial exploitation, including the payment of subminimum wages; and equal educational opportunity.

The Association believes that each of these rights carries with it a comparable responsibility. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living. No student has the right to interfere with the education of other students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of each person involved in the educational process.

The Association believes in the confidentiality of student information and opposes its dissemination to any organization or institution without the consent of the student and/or parent.

The Association also believes that student rights must be safeguarded when students are involved in commercial premium campaigns and fundraising activities. (69, 95)

C-34. Drug and Alcohol Testing of Students

The National Education Association believes that mandatory drug and alcohol testing of students without probable cause is an unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of privacy and opposes such testing.

The Association further believes that schools must immediately notify parents/guardians of students suspected of abusing drugs and alcohol and provide information about support services. (87, 97)

C-35. HIV/AIDS Testing of Students

The National Education Association opposes mandatory/involuntary human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) testing of students. (87, 93)

C-36. Optimizing Students' Time To Learn

The National Education Association believes that time to learn is essential in promoting optimum achievement in the schools.

The Association believes that —

a. Student absences from school have adverse effects on program continuity, academic achievement, and mastery by the student. The Association urges its affiliates to work with school districts, parent groups, other appropriate community groups, and public agencies to develop programs to reduce student absences.
b. Excessive or unusual working hours are detrimental to a student's attention span and academic achievement. The child labor laws, as structured by the Fair Labor Standards Act, must be monitored, enforced, and strengthened by local, state, and national governing bodies. (79, 96)

C-37. Media, Games, and Children

The National Education Association recognizes that children are an especially vulnerable audience who must be protected from violence, prejudice, sexual content, stereotyping, and exploitation by advertisers; makers of video games, audiocassettes, board games, and toys; and other media professionals. To help children become critical users of the media, the Association encourages advertisers, media professionals, and parents to use materials of the highest caliber. To help parents become critical consumers, the Association encourages manufacturers of games and toys to make explicit to consumers, prior to purchase, the nature of product contents through specific labeling. Radio and television programmers should make these materials available to children, with consideration given to the child's age, the time of day, and the subject matter. The Association encourages advertisers and media professionals to use standard grammar and correct spelling and to refrain from the use of sexist terminology and profanity.

The Association urges its affiliates to establish media study committees to monitor media activities, to provide research materials and training for members, and to promote positive educational programming. The Association also urges the movie industry to edit movies for educational use and make them available in video format. The Association further urges its affiliates and members to help parents determine the types of programs their children should listen to or view. (69, 95)

C-38. Impact of Homelessness and Poverty on Children and Youth

The National Education Association believes that education must be provided for all children and youth and believes that poverty negatively impacts children's ability to learn and deprives them of the opportunity for academic success.

The Association believes in the right of all children and youth, including those without a permanent legal address, to an education, adequate housing, and health care.

The Association further believes that school and community groups should work cooperatively to meet the needs of homeless and impoverished children and youth. (88, 96)

C-39. Extracurricular Participation

The National Education Association believes that the successful completion of an academic program is the first priority for all students.

The Association also believes that all schools, colleges, universities, and parents/guardians must accept their educational responsibilities to student athletes and participants in other extracurricular activities. These students should not be exploited for economic and/or personal gain.

The Association further believes that there should be fair and equitable eligibility requirements for student participation and student progress should be monitored frequently. (84, 97)

C-40. Gender Equity in Athletic Programs

The National Education Association believes that at all educational levels female and male students must have equal opportunity to participate in athletic programs.

The Association urges that athletic funds for facilities, equipment, and remuneration of staff be allocated equally between female and male programs. (74, 93)

C-41. Reduction of Gang-Related Crime

The National Education Association believes that families, schools, communities, businesses, and law enforcement agencies have critical roles in reducing gang-related crime. The Association supports collaboration among these groups in an effort to reduce such crime.

The Association supports education programs that promote positive self-image and academic success — such as dropout prevention/intervention, before-and after-school programs, and job training — particularly for at-risk students in areas where there is a high degree of gang activity.

The Association also believes that the business community has an important role in reducing illegal activities by gangs. The Association supports programs that lead to meaningful job opportunities for youths.

The Association believes that law enforcement agencies should be active participants in education and employment programs to reduce gang-related crimes.

The Association further believes that federal, state, and local gov-

ernments should develop and implement education and youth employment programs in helping to reduce illegal activities by gangs. (88, 94)

C-42. Juvenile Offenders

The National Education Association believes that juvenile offenders who are convicted of serious crimes and who are contained in detention centers should be provided a healthy environment conducive to positive social change.

The Association further believes that these juveniles, while in this environment, should be provided with education programs that will enable them to become contributing members of society. Teachers of these youths must be prepared to provide instruction in life skills and learning skills.

Juvenile offenders who pose a threat to the health and safety of others and who are not placed in these centers should be provided educational services in an appropriate alternative setting rather than the regular public school setting.

The Association further believes that all education employees working with a student having a record of violent behavior or severe behavioral problems should be immediately informed of the nature, extent, and duration of the student's record of violent acts/disruptive behaviors. Before student placement, these employees should also be provided with teaching strategies that may impact the student's learning style and a plan for behavior management and modification.

The Association supports the placement of juveniles who are not charged with any offense or those who are status offenders in separate facilities from those persons who are charged with criminal offenses. (88, 93)

C-43. Alcohol/Tobacco Endorsements

The National Education Association believes that individual performers and organizers of concerts and sporting events should refrain from endorsing and advertising alcohol and tobacco products. The Association supports the elimination of incongruent and secondary advertising of alcohol and tobacco products. (90, 97)

C-44. Alcohol Advertising

The National Education Association believes that alcoholic beverages and their use should not be advertised. (88, 97)

D. PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE AMONG EDUCATORS

D-1. Teacher Preparation Programs: Recruitment

The National Education Association believes in a strong program of teacher recruitment with special emphasis on recruitment of underrepresented candidates. Preteaching programs and recruitment efforts should be developed at high schools and community/junior colleges in conjunction with institutions of higher education with teacher preparation programs. These efforts should include the active participation of practicing pre-K through 12 teachers.

Individuals interested in teaching as a career should attend institutions accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Counselors and advisers should inform students of the advantages of attending NCATE-accredited institutions.

Federally financed loan and grant programs should be established to encourage students to become professional educators. Progressive forgiveness of the loan should be based upon the number of years of professional service.

Grants should be secured from both public and private sources to assist students planning to pursue a career in education. (90, 96)

D-2. Teacher Preparation Programs: Admissions

The National Education Association believes that its affiliates should continue to improve standards for admission into the teaching profession by working cooperatively with teacher training institutions and their professional organizations. Further, the Association believes that the appropriate agency within each state should regularly monitor and evaluate the teacher preparation programs within the state as to content and presentation to ensure quality and continuity. Requirements for admission to college of education programs should be rigorous yet flexible enough to allow admittance to those who demonstrate potential for effective practice. Admission to any program should be based on multiple considerations, such as recommendations of faculty (liberal arts and education), grade-point average, personal interviews, portfolio reviews, and recommendations of persons in related fields, but standardized achievement test scores must not be the sole basis for admission. The selection process shall be a continuous and integral part of the candidate's educational program. Such process shall be nondiscriminatory.

The Association urges appropriate state agencies to monitor projected needs by certification areas and to inform teacher preparation institutions of those needs on a continuing basis. Teacher preparation institutions should counsel and prepare prospective teachers in numbers consistent with projected needs. (70, 95)

D-3. Teacher Preparation Programs: Affiliate Participation

The National Education Association believes that its affiliates should take immediate steps to become involved in college and university committees that control teacher education programs. To this end, the affiliates should—

a. Support inclusion of instruction in school law and in the values, ethics, responsibilities, and structure of professional teacher organizations
b. Support regulations that would place credentialed educators with teaching experience in decision-making roles in departments of education
c. Share in the responsibility for practicum experience with the public schools and the institutions that prepare teachers
d. Encourage affiliate members to promote NEA Student membership among all higher education students working in their classrooms during any part of a teacher preparation program. (70, 94)

D-4. Teacher Preparation Programs: Content and Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that a sound teacher preparation program must be equitably funded and must —

a. Involve practicing, licensed preschool through adult education teachers in the design, implementation, evaluation, and systematic change of the program
b. Involve students preparing to teach in the evaluation and improvement of the standards of the program
c. Involve teacher educators who are licensed and experienced in their instructional areas and demonstrate practical knowledge of schools and classroom teaching
d. Include a policy of affirmative recruitment
e. Include tests, reports, student teaching, portfolio reviews, and other measures of performance designed to assess progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary for effective teaching
f. Include required courses in the liberal arts, subject or grade-level specialty, reading, methodologies for the instruction of the limited English proficiency student, and professional studies that include learning theories, curriculum design, classroom management, discipline, student assessment, and teaching techniques
g. Include instruction and field experience in the uses of appropriate technology for managing and advancing instruction
h. Include instructional content and experience that address our multicultural, multiethnic diversity, recognize the contributions of ethnic and other minorities, and provide techniques for teaching culturally diverse students
i. Involve students preparing to teach in recognizing biases and acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to assist them in creating a bias-free environment
j. Include instructional content and experience in research and information skills, group processes, shared decision-making, strategic planning, the dynamics of intergroup communications, human growth and development, the changing role of the family, exceptional behaviors, and human relations
k. Include a variety of field experiences throughout the preparation program culminating in a practicum
l. Include instructional content in the areas of job contracts, salary schedules, benefit programs, and working conditions
m. Include practical instruction and experience in the processes, strategies, realities, responsibilities, and challenges of collective, shared decision-making, problem-solving, and strategic planning
n. Include course content in awareness and educational programs of all special education areas recognized by federal law
o. Provide access to professional and preprofessional organizations related to the education profession and areas of certification. (70, 96)

D-5. Teacher Preparation Programs: Student Teaching

The National Education Association believes that student teachers should be provided with legal status and liability protection.

Higher education institutions and cooperating school systems should supply any and all instructional materials that student teachers would require during their student teaching terms. Students who are implicitly or explicitly discouraged from outside employment during their student teaching should be provided financial assistance, internship programs, or tuition waivers by the state.

Affiliates should formulate standards for school systems that receive student teachers, including guidelines for cooperating teachers and college coordination of student teachers. Supervising or cooperating teachers in a student teacher program should have reduced teaching loads and be given a minimum established compensation. Acceptance of student teachers should be on a voluntary basis.

The recommendation of the supervising or cooperating classroom teachers in such a program shall weigh heavily in the final decision regarding readiness to enter the teaching profession. Teacher preparation programs should offer alternative placements for student teachers assigned to a school in the event of a strike or other work stoppage in order to meet the requirements for a teaching license. (70, 96)

D-6. Peer Assistance and Review Programs

The National Education Association believes that high standards within the teaching profession and continuous improvement in professional practices are cornerstones of the profession. Some local associations may conclude that, under certain circumstances, a peer assistance or a peer assistance and review program is an appropriate mechanism for achieving these objectives.

The primary purpose of any such program should be to provide "assistance"—to improve professional practice, retain promising teachers, and build professional knowledge to improve student success. A local association may, at its option, also decide to include a "review" component in the program—involving the evaluation of performance. If a local association takes either position, the program should—

a. Be developed through collective bargaining or through a joint association/school district agreement in nonbargaining states
b. Be governed by a board composed of an equal number or a majority of representatives appointed by the local association
c. Acknowledge that the school district makes the final decision to retain or seek nonrenewal or termination, but that recommendations forwarded by the joint governing body are routinely accepted and acted upon by the district
d. Ensure that only teachers who are deemed by their peers to be highly skilled practitioners are selected for the role of consulting teacher, that the consulting teacher's area of expertise is the same as or closely related to that of the participating teacher, and that the consulting teacher is chosen by the program governing bodies with the approval of the participating teacher involved
e. Seek consulting teachers who reflect the diverse population of the teaching staff
f. Provide that consulting teachers are properly compensated and provided adequate time to fulfill their responsibilities
g. Provide that consulting teachers receive extensive and ongoing training in mentoring/coaching skills, district initiatives and resources, and current education instructional methods
h. Establish guidelines for the referral of teachers as well as safeguards to prevent unwarranted referrals
i. Establish and convey to all consulting and participating teachers clear rules on allowable uses of documents, products, and communications arising from the program
j. Require extensive documentation based on ongoing assessments of each participant
k. Require that rigorous and extensive assistance be provided over an appropriate period of time to help the participating teacher attain the requisite standard of proficiency before any effort to counsel the participating teacher out of the profession is made or a recommendation to initiate nonrenewal or termination proceedings is issued
l. Ensure due process protection and duty of fair representation procedures
m. Guarantee that participating teachers, consulting teachers, and teachers who sit on governing bodies do not lose their Association membership or bargaining unit status by virtue of their participation in the program. (97)

D-7. Mentor Programs

The National Education Association believes that mentor programs are means of enhancing the professional expertise of employees. The Association also believes that the planning, implementation, and evaluation of such programs must be negotiated or cooperatively developed and maintained by the school district and the local affiliate.

The Association further believes that the duties and responsibilities of all parties must be clearly defined and uniformly administered. Mentors must be selected through a defined process with articulated criteria, be properly trained and compensated, and be provided with adequate time to fulfill their responsibilities. The state or local authority has the obligation to provide hold-harmless protection.

The Association further believes that any documentation that results from the mentoring process must be confidential and the sole property of the person mentored and must not be included in the participant's personnel file. (88, 97)

D-8. Administrator Preparation

The National Education Association believes that administrators and staff are partners in the total school program. Administrators must maintain valid administrator licensure and have periodic teaching experience. Areas of instructional content and experience should include participatory decision-making, interpersonal skills, personnel selection, staff evaluation, curriculum, school management techniques, and cultural diversity training. Prior to credentialing, an administrator shall have served at least five years in a full-time teaching position. (85, 94)

D-9. A Licensed Educator in Every Professional Position

The National Education Association believes that all educators must have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their duties. Each professional position, including early childhood development and other specialized and substitute positions, must be filled by an educator who has completed, in an accredited institution of higher education, course work required by his/her position and a teacher preparation program, and who holds the state license and/or appropriate state vocational license.

The Association opposes any attempts to diminish the quality of learning or services through the elimination of teaching positions, through the subcontracting of teaching and support services, through involuntary assignment out of field, or through the revision of school staff management under the guise of improving educational opportunity. (69, 97)

D-10. Faculty Governance in Higher Education

The National Education Association believes that faculty and staff in higher education should participate in governance of their educational institutions. Higher education faculty should have primary responsibility for determining curricula, methods of instruction, and subject matter; establishing requirements for earning degrees and certificates; reviewing institutional budgets; and making recommendations on financial issues that impact academic programs.

Where appropriate, faculty and staff should participate in the selection and evaluation process and determine the status of colleagues and administrators, especially appointments, reappointments, and tenure.

The Association also believes it is the primary responsibility of faculty and staff, where appropriate, to establish procedures relative to promotions, sabbaticals, and research support.

The Association further believes that collective bargaining provides an additional method of institutional governance. Faculty and staff should determine policies and procedures to govern salary structure, pay increases, fringe benefit programs, calendar, and working conditions. (94, 97)

D-11. Supervision of Extracurricular Activities

The National Education Association believes that extracurricular activities are an important part of the public school experience. Education institutions should adopt policies, standards, and guidelines for staffing extracurricular activities and for hiring personnel who have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform those duties, and for providing staff members with appropriate ongoing training. Qualified education employees must be given the opportunity of first acceptance of paid positions. (94, 96)

D-12. Participation in Professional Associations

The National Education Association believes that every education employee has the right and obligation to participate fully in professional associations. Policies adopted by governing boards should provide released time without loss of pay to education employees fulfilling leadership responsibilities or attending professional meetings. Released time should be equitably provided to all education employees, without harassment and without preference given to educational position. (86, 97)

D-13. Professional Development Resource Centers

The National Education Association believes that state/regional professional development resource centers provide an opportunity for education employees to share resources, experiences, and ideas for professional growth. The Association also believes that these centers should be established, funded, and accessible to all education employees. The Association further believes that members from the local associations should comprise a majority of the membership of the professional development resource center policy board.

The Association supports funding for such resource centers. (82, 97)

D-14. Professional Development

The National Education Association believes that professional development is necessary throughout the career of the education employee. Professional development programs should provide equal opportunities for education employees to gain the knowledge and skills important to their position, to the improvement of their programs, and to their job performance. Appropriate technology must be available to all education employees to assure access to information and ideas. Local professional development and grant programs should assure that appropriate education employees have a decisive voice at every stage of planning, implementation, and evaluation. (76, 97)

D-15. Discipline, Order, and Safety

The National Education Association believes education employees should be provided management techniques on prevention and interven-

tion strategies to assure a positive and safe educational environment.

Ongoing educational training programs in conflict prevention/conflict resolution should be provided for all education employees dealing with students' behavior before, during, and after crisis situations. (94, 96)

D-16. Neurological Disorder Awareness

The National Education Association believes in the establishment of continuing education programs that will increase education employee awareness of neurological disorders and symptoms that affect student learning. Qualified health professionals should be cooperatively involved in these programs. (87, 97)

D-17. Teacher Exchange Programs

The National Education Association believes that teachers and students benefit when teachers participate in teacher exchange programs. Voluntary teacher exchange programs should be cooperatively established with governing boards to offer such programs within and among the states, schools of federal agencies within and outside the United States, and agencies abroad. (74, 97)

D-18. Education Employee Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that formal performance-based evaluations must be augmented by formative evaluation components in order to assure the continuing competency of all education employees in their respective fields.

An effective evaluation procedure supported by well-developed, continuing professional growth programs will enable all education employees to keep abreast of developments in their areas of specialization. Such procedures, with sufficient resources, can help ensure job competency, identify deficiencies in performance, and provide options such as counseling, training programs, a remediation plan, and opportunities to observe peers.

If following such an evaluation and after being given sufficient time, training, and opportunity for improvement, a person is then formally reevaluated and incompetency can be documented, dismissal proceedings with guaranteed due process may be instituted. Such proceedings must be implemented by administrators/evaluators who are properly trained and held accountable for appropriate and fair evaluation systems.

The evaluation procedure should be cooperatively developed and maintained in conjunction with representatives selected by the local association and should include —

a. Clear performance expectations that are specific to the job description
b. Regular observation of job performance with advance notice and discussion of evaluation visits and a timely consultation after each visit
c. A written evaluation report to be provided to the person being evaluated
d. Opportunity for a written response prior to the placement of the evaluation in the personnel file
e. An employee improvement plan that will not interfere with any earned pay increase or longevity credit
f. A provision for an alternative evaluator and/or an opportunity for an alternative evaluation report to ensure a fair and unbiased evaluation of the education employee
g. An unbiased appeals process with an evidentiary hearing under oath.

By participating in an evaluation process, an education employee shall not waive his or her right to due process in any subsequent contractual or legal proceeding. (69, 95)

D-19. Competency Testing and Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that competency testing must not be used as a condition of employment, license retention, evaluation, placement, ranking, or promotion of licensed teachers.

The Association opposes the use of pupil progress, standardized achievement tests, or student assessment tests for purposes of teacher evaluation. (69, 97)

D-20. Administrator Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that procedures for evaluation of administrators should include evaluations by education employees under their direct supervision. If after being given assistance, sufficient time, and opportunity for improvement, an administrator is formally reevaluated and there is documentation of incompetence, dismissal proceedings with guaranteed due process should be instituted by the chief administrator, provided that administrators/evaluators are properly prepared and held accountable for the implementation of appropriate and fair evaluation systems. (85, 97)

D-21. Evaluation and Promotion in Higher Education

The National Education Association affirms the importance of teaching in institutions of higher education and believes, therefore, that research and publication ought not to be the only criteria on which higher education faculty are evaluated and/or promoted.

The Association further believes that its higher education members must be allowed to determine through the collective bargaining process the methods by which they are evaluated and promoted. (86)

E. GAIN RECOGNITION OF THE BASIC IMPORTANCE OF THE TEACHER IN THE LEARNING PROCESS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES IN THE EDUCATION EFFORT

E-1. Instructional Excellence

The National Education Association believes that to achieve and maintain instructional excellence there must be continual improvement in the education process. The Association also believes that teachers have the primary responsibility for instructional excellence and must have the primary authority to recommend improvements in instruction through a democratic decision-making process. The Association further believes all education employees should support high standards for instructional excellence and contribute to the continual improvement of education. The Association recommends that education employees collaborate in the research, development, and field testing of new instructional methods and materials. (69, 96)

E-2. Time To Teach

The National Education Association believes that "time to teach" refers not only to those hours during which an educator is actually teaching but also applies to those conditions that contribute to the student-teacher relationship. These include a reasonable, carefully defined work load, a duty-free lunch period, an office in which to work, access to telephones, adequate and appropriate office equipment, access to technology, freedom from interruptions during instructional time, unencumbered planning time, time to evaluate student progress, time for implementation of federal and state legislative requirements, and elimination of the noninstructional tasks required of a teacher.

The Association recognizes that accountability requires reporting on the uses of funding derived from federal, state, and local education programs. The Association believes, however, that in order for the classroom educator to spend adequate time on instructional duties, the paperwork burden on the practitioner must be reduced and held to an absolute minimum.

The Association believes that teachers need the freedom and flexibility to schedule time and design programs to meet the needs of students. (69, 94)

E-3. Selection and Challenges of Materials and Teaching Techniques

The National Education Association believes that democratic values can best be transmitted in an atmosphere that does not restrain free inquiry and learning. The Association also believes that quality teaching depends on the freedom to select materials and techniques. Teachers and librarians/media specialists must have the right to select and use materials and techniques without censorship or legislative interference.

The Association deplores prepublishing censorship, book-burning crusades, and attempts to ban books from school libraries/media centers and school curricula. Challenges to the choice of instructional materials and techniques must be orderly and objective, under procedures mutually adopted by professional associations and school governing boards.

Instructional materials and equipment must be provided in sufficient variety and quantity to serve all students. (69, 96)

E-4. Development of Materials

The National Education Association believes that public school teachers and postsecondary faculty should be involved in the development and field testing of all educational materials offered for adoption or purchase by public school districts and educational institutions. Materials in all subject areas should include strategies that encourage student interaction, be developmentally appropriate, be free of stereotypes, address divergent points of view, contain sufficient activities to teach the concepts, and provide for the evaluation of higher level thinking skills.

Where school districts and educational institutions involve teachers and faculty in the development of any educational materials, participation should be voluntary and compensated. (84, 96)

E-5. Cultural Diversity in Instructional Materials and Activities

The National Education Association believes that educational materials and activities should accurately portray cultural diversity and contributions of ethnic-minority groups. Ethnic-minority teachers must be involved in selecting educational materials and in preparing teachers in their use.

The Association recognizes that additional instructional materials chosen for classrooms and libraries may rightfully contain a number of points of view to allow students to become familiar with the attitudes and recommendations from various segments of the literary world.

The Association acknowledges that many contemporary texts related to ethnic-minority groups do not portray realistically their lifestyles but convey a negative self-concept to ethnic-minority students. The Association believes that educators and governing boards should adopt and use textbooks and other educational materials in all subject areas that accurately portray the contributions of ethnic and other minorities. (69, 95)

E-6. Women in Instructional Materials
The National Education Association believes that educational materials should accurately portray the influence and contributions of women in our nation and throughout the world. (96)

E-7. Religious Heritage in Instructional Materials
The National Education Association believes that educational materials should accurately portray the influence of religion in our nation and throughout the world. (88)

E-8. Impact of Federal and State Legislative Mandates
The National Education Association believes that federal and state mandates regarding school programs should be broad, general guidelines and should not be based on student achievement. Mandated programs should be established or eliminated only in conjunction with the Association and its state and local affiliates. Mandates should be assessed by affiliates and local stakeholders with particular attention to the impact on students, education employees, school programs, and finances. (79, 97)

E-9. Academic and Professional Freedom
The National Education Association believes that academic freedom is essential to the teaching profession. Academic freedom includes the rights of teachers and learners to explore and discuss divergent points of view. Controversial issues should be a part of the instructional program when, in the judgment of the professional staff, the issues are appropriate to the curriculum and to the maturity level of the student. A teacher shall not be fired, transferred, or removed from his or her position for refusing to suppress the free expression rights of students.

The Association also believes that professional freedom is essential to the teaching profession. Professional freedom includes the teachers' right to evaluate, criticize, and/or advocate their personal point of view concerning the policies and programs of the schools. Teachers also have the right to assist colleagues when their academic or professional freedoms are violated.

The Association further believes that legislation and regulations that mandate or permit the teaching of religious doctrines and/or groups that promote antipublic education agendas violate both student and teacher rights. The Association urges its affiliates to seek repeal of these mandates where they exist. (69, 92)

E-10. Intellectual Property Rights
The National Education Association believes that all faculty and staff should retain full ownership of and subsequent control over their intellectual property. (96)

E-11. Access to Copyrighted Materials for Educational Use
The National Education Association believes that maximum access to copyrighted materials that relate to the curriculum is in the public interest. The Association recognizes that the copyright law as revised provides for two parallel sets of rights: the rights of those who create to profit from their efforts and the rights of teachers to a limited use of those materials in teaching.

The Association insists that the public interest requires that the copyright law include an appropriate not-for-profit clause to guarantee to teachers and educational institutions use of copyrighted materials for nonprofit educational purposes. (69, 86)

E-12. Assessment of Student Learning
The National Education Association supports ongoing comprehensive assessment of student growth. A student's level of performance is best assessed with authentic measures directly linked to the lessons teachers teach and the materials teachers use.

The Association believes that the primary purposes of assessment are as follows:

a. To assist students and their parents/guardians in identifying the student's strengths and needs
b. To encourage students to become lifelong learners
c. To measure a program's effectiveness, communicate learning expectations, and provide a basis for determining instructional strategies
d. To develop appropriate learning experiences for students.

The Association believes that no one measure should be used to determine a student's performance. Teachers should utilize a variety of measures to accurately assess student growth. All methods of assessment shall be free of cultural, racial, and gender biases.

The Association also believes that classroom teachers must be involved in the development of assessment systems and are best qualified to determine the criteria for assessment of students and dissemination of results. (81, 97)

E-13. Support Personnel in the Education Process
The National Education Association believes that all education employees are essential to the learning environment. The Association recognizes that educational support personnel promote positive role models that enhance the education process. (90, 91)

F. PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYEES AND ADVANCE THEIR INTERESTS AND WELFARE

F-1. Nondiscriminatory Personnel Policies/Affirmative Action
The National Education Association believes that personnel policies and practices must guarantee that no person be employed, retained, paid, dismissed, suspended, demoted, transferred, or retired because of race, color, national origin, cultural diversity, accent, religious beliefs, residence, physical disability, political activities, professional association activity, age, size, marital status, family relationship, gender, or sexual orientation. Affirmative action plans and procedures that will encourage active recruitment and employment of women, minorities, and men in underrepresented education categories should be developed and implemented.

It may be necessary, therefore, to give preference in recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion policies to certain ethnic-minority groups or women or men to overcome past discrimination. (69, 96)

F-2. Pay Equity/Comparable Worth
The National Education Association believes that all workers should be paid on the basis of the requirements, skills, and worth of their jobs and that factors such as the gender or race of the individual performing the job should never play a role in determining salary.

The Association supports all efforts to attain accurate and unbiased forms of job evaluation and to raise the pay of those jobs that are presently undervalued. The "market value" means of establishing pay cannot be the final determinant of pay scales since it too frequently reflects the race and sex bias in our society.

The Association encourages efforts by education employees and others of the work force to gain salary levels appropriate to the skill, value, responsibility, and requirements of their jobs. (82, 93)

F-3. Uniform Compensation
The National Education Association opposes any attempt to establish tiered compensation systems that place entry-level employees on a salary and/or benefits schedule that differs from that of career employees. (86)

F-4. Tax Deductions for Professional Expenses
The National Education Association believes that education employees must continue to perform and develop professionally and that expenses incurred to do so are professional and therefore must be considered as necessary and ordinary and must be uniformly deductible, as an adjustment, from gross income in the computation of federal, state, and local income taxes. Deductible expenses should include, but not be limited to, expenses incurred relating to sabbatical leaves; educational travel for maintenance and improvement of skills; an in-home office; education-related auto use; and, purchasing of teaching supplements and professional supplies, materials, and equipment. (69, 93)

F-5. Collective Bargaining Rights
The National Education Association believes that the attainment and exercise of collective bargaining rights are essential to the promotion of education employee and student needs in society. The Association demands that these rights be advocated where they are now abridged or denied and strengthened where they are now secured. (80, 93)

F-6. Collective Bargaining and Grievance Procedures
The National Education Association believes in the necessity of a public employees' federal collective bargaining law that will not weaken any state or local bargaining laws. The Association demands that federal, state, and local governing bodies bargain collectively with all public employees. The Association supports legislation that would prohibit the negotiating away of any public employee statutory benefit, right, or protection.

The Association also believes that local affiliates and governing boards must negotiate, in good faith, written master contracts. These contracts must include terms and conditions of employment and other matters of concern and include a provision for agency fee.

Grievance procedures shall be provided in the master contract with definite steps to appeal the application or interpretation of the contract.

Binding arbitration shall be a part of the grievance procedure.

The Association further believes that binding arbitration and the right to strike must be an integral part of any collective bargaining process.

Coordinated bargaining by Association affiliates on a regional or statewide basis is an important component of collective bargaining.

The Association believes that state affiliates should seek statutory penalties for governing boards that do not bargain in good faith. Further, state affiliates should seek statutory penalties for governing bodies that seek to rescind negotiated agreements by declarations of bankruptcy or by any other means. (69, 96)

F-7. Strikes

The National Education Association denounces the practice of keeping schools open during a strike. The Association believes that when a picket line is established by the authorized bargaining unit, crossing it is strikebreaking and jeopardizes the welfare of school employees and the educational process.

The Association also believes that the chances of reaching voluntary agreement in good faith are reduced when one party to the negotiation process possesses the power to use the courts unilaterally against the other party.

The Association recommends that several procedures be used in resolution of impasse — such as mediation, fact finding, binding arbitration, political action, and strike — if conditions make it impossible to provide quality education. In the event of a strike by school employees, extracurricular and cocurricular activities must cease.

Appropriate teacher training institutions should be notified that a strike is being conducted and urged not to cooperate in emergency licensing or placement practices that constitute strikebreaking. The Association condemns denial of credits to students working in the school for credit as part of a teacher preparation or credential program who have honored a work stoppage.

The Association condemns the use of ex parte injunction, jailing, setting of excessive bail, fines, firing of members, community service in lieu of other penalties, decertification of an organization as the bargaining agent, loss of association rights, and revocation or suspension of tenure, licensure, and retirement benefits in school work stoppages.

The Association urges enactment and enforcement of statutes guaranteeing the rights of school employees when a work stoppage occurs, including the right to present their case to the state or courts, before back-to-work orders are issued.

The Association further urges its affiliates to establish practices and procedures to supply financial and emotional support as well as external and internal publicity for any local engaged in a strike. (69, 94)

F-8. Basic Contract Standards

The National Education Association believes that collective bargaining agreements between education employees and their employers should contain certain standard contractual concepts. Therefore, the Association urges its affiliates to negotiate agreements that include —

a. A grievance procedure that terminates with final and binding arbitration
b. Just cause for any disciplinary action with guaranteed due process through final and binding arbitration and continuation of all employee rights, including full compensation and job security
c. A seniority list that is updated, published, and distributed annually
d. Layoff and recall based only on seniority as bargaining unit members, licensure/certification, and to the extent legally permissible, racial balance
e. Employer-paid fringe benefits, including but not limited to comprehensive health, life, dental, vision, and income protection insurance and employee assistance programs, that fully cover bargaining unit members, domestic partners, and their families
f. Membership in the association or the payment of a fair-share fee as a condition of employment
g. Required posting of all vacant or newly created positions along with the right of bargaining unit members to apply for these positions
h. Unassigned preparation, planning, and travel time as applicable for all members of the bargaining unit
i. Specified class size, teaching load, and job description
j. A duty-free lunch period of not less than 30 minutes for all members of the bargaining unit
k. Nondiscriminatory, fair, and equitable treatment of bargaining unit members
l. Contractually defined procedures for evaluation and promotion
m. Released time for association business with full pay and fringe benefits
n. Parental/child rearing leave for employees to provide care for natural or adopted children
o. Contractually defined procedures for ensuring education employee decision-making in curriculum design and related instructional management and reporting systems
p. Salary schedules based upon preparation, professional growth, and length of service and excluding any form of merit pay except in institutions of higher education where it has been bargained
q. Extracurricular and extra-duty assignments filled on a voluntary basis and compensated at no less than the employee's regular rate of pay
r. Protection from being required to participate in community service
s. Retirement benefits based on all income derived from school employment, including extracurricular and extra-duty pay
t. Clearly defined bargaining unit membership
u. Placement on the salary schedule based on qualifications and number of years of experience in the profession
v. A guaranteed safe and healthy working environment
w. The school calendar
x. Protection from unilateral changes in terms or conditions of employment
y. Provisions to define class loads, student contact hours, and contract hours for instructors who are involved in distance learning, and to guarantee that technology and distance learning are not used to supplant employees. (89, 97)

F-9. Salaries and Benefits

The National Education Association believes that salary and benefit structures for education employees are matters for collective bargaining. The Association further believes that any proposed or legislated salary and benefit structure should not bypass or undermine the bargaining process or negotiated agreements.

The Association believes that salary schedules should —

a. Be based on preparation, academic degrees, experience, professional growth, responsibilities, and full length of service
b. Assure that initial placement and advancement on the salary schedule are nondiscriminatory
c. Be independent of national certification unless the impact of any national certificate is determined through the collective bargaining process where it exists or by agreement of the local NEA affiliates in those states where it does not exist
d. Provide and maintain structural integrity through the use of an index or percentage guide for experience increments and levels of academic preparation
e. Assure that salary paid for summer employment, continuing education programs, extended contracts, conducting employee training or workshops, and extra duty is not less than the rate for regular pay
f. Assure that salaries paid in nontraditional adult and alternative programs be on par with salaries paid in traditional programs and that any personnel serving lower socioeconomic groups not be paid less than equivalent educational professionals providing similar service to higher socioeconomic groups.
g. Provide for entry-level salaries and career earnings comparable to those of other professions and occupations with similar preparation and responsibilities and be structured to provide compensation levels that encourage classroom teachers to remain in the classroom and support personnel in the educational setting
h. Define "salary increase" to mean the exact monetary differential between the existing salary schedule and the proposed salary schedule — exclusive of incremental adjustments — and all basic benefits.

The Association believes that local affiliates can best promote the economic welfare of all education employees, regardless of source of funding, by following the salary standards developed at the state and national levels. Extra duties performed by education employees should be on a voluntary basis and should be accompanied by equitable extra-duty pay.

The Association believes that performance pay schedules, such as merit pay, are inappropriate.

The Association also believes its affiliates should seek the repeal of laws limiting maximum salaries and benefits for education employees.

The Association further believes that there should be no limit to the number of years of experience an education employee can transfer.

The Association further believes that education employees should be provided with benefits including, but not limited to —

a. Comprehensive insurance programs
    1. Health
    2. Dental
    3. Vision
    4. Hearing
    5. Life
    6. Legal
    7. Workers' compensation
    8. Long-term physical and mental disability
b. Paid leaves
    1. Sick leave, with unlimited accumulation
    2. Personal leave with unlimited accumulation
    3. Bereavement leave

4. Parental leave, including adoption
5. Dependent care leave
6. Sabbatical leave
7. Professional leave
8. Association leave
9. Religious leave

c. Additional remuneration
1. Severance pay
2. Tuition reimbursement
3. Retirement compensation
4. Unemployment compensation
5. Benefit extension for laid-off employees

d. Personal assistance
1. Personal assault protection, and in the event of assault, counseling services and leave that is not subject to sick or personal leave
2. Employee assistance program
3. Reimbursement for damages to or loss of personal property at work site
4. Child care center
5. An opportunity to participate in a cafeteria-type plan or plan authorized by Section 125 of the U.S. Federal Tax Code.

The Association believes that education employees should have equal access to all benefits, including comprehensive health, dental, and vision insurance and employee assistance programs for their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents.

The Association also believes that comprehensive health insurance, life insurance, and long-term disability insurance should be provided for education employees on official leave of absence or parental leave.

The Association further believes that provisions should be made for retiree's, their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents at their option to continue in the comprehensive health, dental, and vision care program of the school district, educational system, or institution.

The Association believes that, if school districts consolidate or separate, education employees should not lose their tenure or have their salary, benefits, or seniority reduced. (69, 96)

F-10. Faculty Reward Structures in Higher Education

The National Education Association believes that the reward structure for an institution of higher education should reflect the mission of the institution. An institution whose mission is teaching undergraduate students should reward good teaching. An institution whose mission is community outreach should reward service. An institution whose mission is basic or applied research should reward good research. The proper balance between teaching, service, and research is contingent upon faculty and administration agreement on the institutional mission of the particular campus. (95)

F-11. Economic Welfare

The National Education Association is opposed to imposition of any controls that place public employees in an inferior economic position, the elimination of programs that guarantee social and economic justice for the American people, and any program that increases unemployment. (79, 86)

F-12. Civil Rights — Employment Protection

The National Education Association, recognizing the continuing erosion of civil rights, reaffirms its commitment to protect the rights of all education employees. The Association believes that all levels of government should monitor and enforce fair employment practice laws. The Association and its affiliates, working with federal, state, and local officials and agencies, shall work to promote enactment of and compliance with such laws and seek to include these rights in contractual agreements. (91, 96)

F-13. Continuing Employment and Fair Dismissal Practices

The National Education Association believes that security of position must be provided for all education employees through appropriate employment policies, including fair dismissal procedures. The laws and master contracts governing said procedures must afford education employees procedural and substantive due process.

The Association further believes that state laws must provide for the continuing employment and/or tenure of state and/or local education employees and that federal law must provide similar protection for education employees in federal schools. (69, 96)

F-14. Reduction in Force

The National Education Association believes that one of its basic responsibilities is job security and urges its affiliates to support legislation and/or to negotiate in master contracts criteria to be utilized should reduction in force (RIF) occur. Criteria should include seniority, objectivity, nondiscrimination, uniformity of application, and affirmative action. Should RIF become necessary, the number of administrators, supervisors, and managers should be reduced at least in proportion to the number of other education employees being reduced. Contracts should establish recall procedures in which staff would be recalled in the reverse order in which they were laid off. Neighboring districts are encouraged to establish jointly such procedures that on a regional basis would provide priority hiring of laid-off education employees.

The Association also believes that local affiliates should —

a. Negotiate reduction in force policies that exclude performance evaluation from consideration in the RIF process
b. Work cooperatively with governing boards and community leaders to assist in rehiring, relocating, and/or providing alternative career training for laid-off education employees
c. Condemn the improper use of RIF to eliminate complete areas from comprehensive educational and pupil personnel programs.

It must be recognized that reduction of supportive staff and special staff and nonreplacement of retiring and other resigning teachers are both forms of reduction in force. (75, 96)

F-15. Mandated Retraining

The National Education Association believes that when a federal, state, or district mandate requires a school employee to be retrained, it is the responsibility of the mandating agency to provide released time for training, to compensate the employee at the employee's hourly rate of pay, and to provide for the cost of tuition, textbooks, and travel. (88, 90)

F-16. Protection of Education Employees

The National Education Association believes education employees and their students require safe schools and that federal and state legislation protecting all school employees from criminal physical attacks should be enacted.

The Association also believes that when school personnel are the victims of physical attack, verbal abuse, theft, vandalism, or harassment due to gender, sexual orientation, or other causes, they should receive the full support of their employer in pursuing legal and other remedies, as well as receiving reimbursement for their personal and property loss. Time lost due to such injuries shall not be deducted from accumulated sick leave.

The Association further believes that the local association must have the right to reflect professional concerns at a student suspension or expulsion hearing.

The Association urges its affiliates to cooperate with court systems to secure strict enforcement of law in cases involving disturbances in public schools and educational institutions. (70, 96)

F-17. Personnel Policies and Procedures

The National Education Association believes that personnel policies and procedures should be written and developed cooperatively by local associations and their local boards of education or appropriate governing bodies. The Association further believes in a cooperative review for improvement of the personnel policies and procedures. Where it exists, improvements will be made through the negotiation process. (69, 96)

F-18. Site-Based Decision Making

The National Education Association supports site-based decision-making processes that are based on contractual/formal agreements between districts and local associations. The Association believes that the scope of local site decision-making should be limited only by the contractual/formal agreement. The Association further believes that such agreements must include the following elements:

a. Voluntary participation by local sites
b. A district-association structure for processing conflict resolution
c. An agreement on the scope of decision-making authority available to sites
d. Decision-making bodies composed of a majority of nonmanagement education employees with all members selected by the constituency represented
e. Compensated planning and training time for staff and governance bodies as well as additional resources necessary for successful implementation
f. Compensation and/or released time for participating staff members. (90, 94)

F-19. Job Sharing

The National Education Association supports the concept of voluntary job sharing as a means of providing a flexible employment opportunity to help meet the varying needs of school employees. The Association believes that there must be fair and equitable distribution of work between both job sharers in terms of the total number of hours of work and the work load.

The Association asserts that job sharing conditions of work must be subject to collective bargaining and that they require the following minimum conditions for successful implementation:

a. Prorated application of the salary schedule with full recognition of years of experience
b. An equitable share of all fringe benefits

c. An agency shop provision
d. The right to revert to full-time status
e. No loss of rights gained through tenure/seniority
f. Proportional credit toward seniority/retirement. (81, 92)

F-20. Misuse of Intern Programs

The National Education Association believes that intern programs should be utilized solely for the development of professional expertise and not as a means of supplanting or reducing educational staff and/or budget. (77, 96)

F-21. Student Workers in Educational Institutions

The National Education Association recognizes the importance of providing employment opportunities for students in educational institutions. The Association deplores, however, the practice of employing students that results in the reduction of permanent education employees. (92, 97)

F-22. Use of Noninstructional Personnel

The National Education Association believes that classroom teachers should be provided with support staff to perform nonteaching duties. Teachers should be involved in the selection, orientation, and training of noninstructional personnel. The noninstructional personnel should only be used to assist the classroom teacher and should have a written job description defining their duties. The Association believes that school systems and educational institutions must provide appropriate continuing education programs for noninstructional personnel.

The Association opposes the use of noninstructional personnel to increase class size. (69, 97)

F-23. Summer School, Extended School Day/Year, and Year-Round Schools

The National Education Association believes that local affiliates must participate fully in the design, authorization, implementation, evaluation, and continuation of summer school, extended school day/year, and year-round schools. Policies governing summer school, extended school day/year, and year-round schools must take into consideration the impact on the community and be in accordance with the Association's principles for professional salaries and class size. Employment in these programs must be on a voluntary basis. (75, 97)

F-24. Unemployment/Disability Compensation

The National Education Association supports the inclusion of educators in unemployment and disability compensation legislation at the state and federal levels. (72, 86)

F-25. Subcontracting/Contracting Out

The National Education Association opposes subcontracting/contracting out in all public school districts and educational institutions. The Association further believes that school districts and educational institutions should not enter into subcontracting agreements that transfer or displace education employees, that replace full-time positions with temporary, part-time or volunteer workers or that abrogate previously contracted benefits, reduce compensation, deny fringe benefits, and/or reduce or eliminate accumulated retirement experience and benefits.

Where subcontracting exists, the Association believes that all personnel who are employed through the subcontractor to work in the school district or educational institution must meet the highest standards of accountability. The subcontractor must conduct background checks prior to an employee being allowed to work in the school district or educational institution, and submit validation of its findings to the school district or educational institution and provide continuing evaluation and supervision of these employees working in the school district or educational institution. The Association insists that such criminal background checks must provide that —

a. Information collected will not be released to boards of education in a form other than a statement of qualification but be kept by the investigating state or national agency
b. Every employee or potential employee has a right to due process and access to records
c. Clear, specific, observable, and objective evidence of rehabilitation for past offenses is included
d. Any fee for background checks shall not be borne by the employee or potential employee. (77, 97)

F-26. Right to Privacy

The National Education Association believes that education employees should be guaranteed rights of privacy. These rights must include —

a. Access to materials in personnel files, which includes being provided a list of all records maintained by an educational institution, being able to inspect and review such records, and obtaining copies of records, explanations, and interpretations of such records, and a record of past accesses
b. Notification in writing within 10 working days of any placement of materials in an individual's file
c. Access to records and opportunity to respond to any record and to challenge records through formal or informal hearings
d. Provision to consent to or deny release of such records, including the right to receive copies of released materials and to purge inaccurate, misleading, and distorted materials
e. Notification and enforcement of these rights by educational institutions
f. A guarantee that only one personnel file per employee exists
g. Confidentiality of medical records
h. Freedom from fingerprinting as a condition of continued employment
i. Refusal of any type of polygraph or lie detector test. (75, 94)

F-27. Privileged Communications

The National Education Association believes that communications between all education employees and students must be legally privileged. The Association further believes that communication between administrators and other education employees must be kept private without the consent of the affected employee. The Association urges its affiliates to aid in seeking legislation that provides this privilege and protects both education employees and students. (74, 96)

F-28. Recording Devices in Schools

The National Education Association insists that the recording or electronic surveillance of any education employee without that person's prior written permission must be prohibited. Any subsequent use of a recording or information obtained by electronic surveillance must have the education employee's prior written permission. (74, 97)

F-29. Protection of Education Employee Advocates

The National Education Association believes in the fundamental right of all education employees to organize in their own self-interest and to speak out in defense of education employees, students, and parents without fear of reprisal.

The Association condemns those governing boards, administrators, and public officials who attempt to fire, demote, transfer, or give punitive assignments to education employees for their leadership in education employee organizations or their forthrightness in questioning apparent violations of their terms of employment. Such actions are an affront to the dignity of all education employees and a desecration of the principles of a democratic education system.

The Association also believes that school administrators, governing boards, and other public officials should respect the dignity of education personnel and reaffirm the rights of citizens to organize through representatives of their own choosing as well as their rights to exercise all other constitutional guarantees.

The Association further believes that an education employee who is required to appear in court in his/her role as an advocate should be provided release time without penalty.

The Association insists that local governing boards and administrators respect the right of Association members to use school property — such as message boxes and meeting rooms — for communication without censorship, prior restraint, or other interference.

The Association shall pursue every recourse to achieve redress of wrongs done to education employees and work for guarantees assuring education employees that reasonable pursuit of their representational responsibilities will cause them neither intimidation, harassment, nor loss of employment. (76, 96)

F-30. Protection of Education Employees From Age Harassment

The National Education Association believes that education employees should be protected from harassment because of age. The Association encourages its affiliates to work with local school districts and institutions of higher education to—

a. Establish strong policies that grant those at or approaching retirement age freedom in their options to continue education employment or to retire
b. Develop educational programs to help individuals recognize, understand, prevent, and combat harassment because of age
c. Develop and publicize a grievance procedure that encourages the reporting of incidents of harassment because of age, resolves complaints promptly, and protects the rights of all parties. (89, 97)

F-31. Employee Rights Pending Court Action

The National Education Association believes that when criminal charges or civil lawsuits are filed against a school employee, the right of due process must be guaranteed. If an employee is removed from student contact or suspended from a position due to pending court action, all employment rights of the employee shall remain in force, including full compensation and job security. Contract provisions should provide procedures to be followed until final disposition of the case. (84, 97)

F-32. Allegations Against Education Employees

The National Education Association believes education employees should be protected from allegations of child abuse made in bad faith.

Any such allegation should be investigated and resolved immediately. The name of the employee should not be publicly revealed until and unless there is a finding of guilt.

Counseling from an outside community agency should be provided for any education employee accused of child abuse, with emphasis upon the fact that such referral does not presume guilt. Additional counseling should be available for the innocent employee after the case is decided.

The Association also believes in procedural and substantive due process for education employees accused of child abuse including a mechanism whereby false or unfounded accusations can be expunged from all records, and supports restoration of job status and all rights and benefits to education employees who are acquitted of child abuse charges. The Association further believes all members should be knowledgeable of current practices in dealing with such allegations. (89, 96)

F-33. Health Examinations

The National Education Association opposes the imposition of physical and mental examinations by governing boards for the purpose of harassment of education employees.

Physical and mental examinations of education employees should be required only when there is probable cause. Results of such examinations shall be subject to medical confidentiality, and the education employee shall be informed of all results.

The Association believes that health-related information must not be released without the written consent of the employee. The employee must have the right to examine and, if needed, correct his/her medical records.

The Association believes that the cost of any required physical or mental diagnostic procedure should be incurred by the agency that requires such procedure and that education employees should be guaranteed the right to select their own physician. (77, 95)

F-34. Drug and Alcohol Testing

The National Education Association believes in a drug- and alcohol-free workplace. However, the Association believes that mandatory and/or random drug and alcohol testing of employees and job applicants is an unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of privacy and opposes such testing. (87, 94)

F-35. HIV/AIDS Testing of Education Employees

The National Education Association opposes mandatory/involuntary human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) testing of education employees or education employment applicants. (87, 93)

F-36. Employees with HIV/AIDS

The National Education Association believes that education employees shall not be fired, nonrenewed, suspended (with or without pay), transferred, or subjected to any other adverse employment action solely because they have tested positive for the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) antibody or have been diagnosed as having HIV/AIDS. (87, 93)

F-37. Hepatitis B Vaccination

The National Education Association believes that governing boards should provide free Hepatitis B vaccinations to all employees choosing to be or required to be vaccinated. (95)

F-38. Catastrophic Illness Support Programs

The National Education Association supports cancer awareness programs. The Association further supports programs designed to help those coping with cancer and other catastrophic illnesses. The Association encourages its members to avail themselves of such programs. (95)

F-39. Stress Management and Wellness Programs

The National Education Association believes that adverse and stressful classroom and school conditions have led to increased emotional and physical disabilities among education employees. The Association supports stress management and wellness programs that facilitate the recognition, prevention, and treatment of stress-related problems. Such programs should ensure confidentiality and treatment without personal jeopardy.

The Association further urges that the harmful effects of stress on education employees be recognized and demands procedures that will ensure confidentiality and treatment without personal jeopardy.

The Association supports employee assistance programs (EAPs) as a voluntary resource that would assist education employees who are experiencing significant professional or personal problems by providing confidential, professional counseling leading to improved health and job effectiveness. (79, 97)

F-40. Medication and Medical Services in Schools

The National Education Association believes that procedures should be established for students who must use prescribed medication or who need other medical services during school hours. Procedures should provide that —

a. Only medical personnel be required to administer such medication or perform such medical services
b. A physician's written verification of the student's need for medication or services be required
c. Written permission of the parent or guardian be required
d. The initial dosage of medication not be given in the school except in life-threatening situations. Initial dosage is the first dosage administered from the prescription
e. Each medication given be recorded on a medication log that includes date, time, and signature of the person giving the medication
f. Medication be delivered in and dispensed from a container properly labeled with the name and strength of medication, name of patient, name of physician, date of the original prescription, and directions for use
g. Proper storage for the medication be available.

The Association also believes that school personnel should be protected from all liability when the adopted procedure is followed. In addition, school personnel have the right to refuse without fear of disciplinary repercussions to administer medication and/or medical services for which school personnel feel unqualified or when proper equipment has not been provided. Medical personnel must be provided additional training by the district prior to performing the medical services in question. (77, 97)

F-41. School Nurses

The National Education Association urges its affiliates to enroll school nurses in active membership and to seek legislation that provides licensure/certification and inclusion in collective bargaining agreements.

The Association believes that professional development programs should be available to all licensed/certified school nurses to augment their skills in delivering health care services. The Association further urges special programs for those school nurses who deal with students with disabilities. (80, 97)

F-42. Save Harmless/Education Employee Liability

The National Education Association believes that educational institutions should —

a. Pay all costs — including attorneys' fees, expenses, and damages — incurred by employees and other agents in defending any civil action arising out of acts or omissions occurring during the performance of their duties
b. Reimburse employees and other agents for all costs incurred in defending any criminal action arising out of acts or omissions occurring during the performance of their duties, provided that said action terminates in favor of the accused.

The Association recommends that educational institutions attempt to secure appropriate insurance to provide the aforesaid payment and reimbursement. (76, 91)

F-43. Transportation Liability Insurance

The National Education Association urges its affiliates to seek the enactment of state and local legislation that would require school systems and educational institutions to provide and to incur the expense of transportation liability insurance for education employees who are requested or required to transport students by private vehicle for any school-related function. (78, 95)

F-44. Misuse of Part-Time or Temporary Education Employees

The National Education Association believes that part-time education employees should receive the same salary and benefits as full-time education employees prorated according to the work load. The Association deplores the practice of employing part-time or temporary employees for the purposes of reducing instructional budgets, reducing the number of full-time education employee positions, or avoiding the maintenance of or an increase in the number of tenure-track positions.

Further, the Association believes that part-time education employees should be employed only when an educational program requires specialized training or expertise not available among the full-time education employees and when the need for such training and expertise does not justify more than half-time employment. (76, 97)

F-45. Substitute Teachers

The National Education Association recognizes the important role of substitute teachers in the maintenance and continuity of daily education. The Association believes that substitute teachers must meet the same standards as any other licensed teacher within the state and supports collective bargaining rights for substitute teachers.

The Association condemns the practice of assigning substitute teachers to regular positions for an extended duration of time. Positions created by extended absence should be filled by available licensed teachers who are eligible to be placed on contractual status by the school district. The Association condemns the use of licensed teachers to substitute for personnel on extended leave without providing full pay plus basic and fringe benefits for the substituting teacher. (75, 97)

F-46. Substitute Educational Support Personnel

The National Education Association recognizes the importance of substitute educational support personnel in the maintenance and continuity of daily operations. The Association believes that an educational support substitute must meet the same standards as the employee for whom he/she substitutes.

The Association supports the right of substitute employees to organize for collective bargaining purposes. The Association also supports the practice of providing schedule pay plus basic and fringe benefits for educational support personnel substituting for permanent educational support personnel on extended leave. (92)

F-47. Educators and Active Duty Service

The National Education Association believes that an education employee whose career is interrupted by a call to active duty service by the National Guard or the reserves should be guaranteed reemployment and all benefits that would accrue if the employee had continued in a position with the school system. (75, 93)

F-48. Employment in Federal Schools

The National Education Association believes that the federal schools should adopt employment practices consistent with federal legislation and with the Association's established policies.

The Association believes that all school employees should share equal responsibilities and that equal rights, benefits, and entitlements should be accorded to all teachers who are employed in federal schools.

The Association urges the development of policies that ensure a minimum of 120 days' notification of military installation and federal school closures. The Association further urges that personnel affected by these closures be provided support by the employer during this transition period. (71, 94)

F-49. Education in Correctional and Rehabilitation Agencies

The National Education Association believes that legislative and professional support should be given to members who teach in federal, state, and local correctional and rehabilitation institutions, hospitals, and other custodial agencies. The Association supports improving the standards of instruction in these institutions. (73, 86)

F-50. Retirement

The National Education Association shall provide leadership in retirement issues and believes that state and local retirement systems and programs should include —

a. Autonomous boards of trustees, the majority of which are elected by and from the membership
b. Actuarial and investment policies that produce sound financing
c. Annual independent review and audit
d. Immediate and full vesting after not more than five years of service
e. Provisions for employee contributions to be a percentage of total compensation, not to exceed the amount contributed by employers. The employer may pay part or all of the employee contribution
f. Provisions permitting the purchase of credit earned while a member of another retirement system
g. Provisions permitting the purchase of credit for sabbatical leaves, maternity/paternity/adoption leaves, and any other approved leaves of absences
h. Normal retirement of at least 50 percent of the highest single year's rate of salary after 20 years of creditable service or at age 55 if fully vested, where actuarially sound, and with provisions that guarantee the employee with full benefits earned from all sources. Voluntary retirement should follow the same provisions
i. Disability retirement for a service-connected disability available to school employees from the first day of employment. Nonservice-connected disability retirement shall be available after five years of service. The benefit formula for disability retirement should yield benefits comparable to those of normal retirement
j. Automatic cost-of-living increases, without regard to age, to maintain purchasing power for retirees and beneficiaries
k. A joint federal-state program to provide those who have been employed in two or more states, in Overseas Dependents Schools, or in other government schools with benefits substantially the same as they would have received if they had retired after a career in one state. Affiliates are urged to support state statutes and proposed federal legislation or any program providing portability coverage
l. Full funding and equitable administration in the granting of retirement credit for military service or provision for purchasing up to five years of retirement credit for military service
m. Nondiscrimination on the basis of gender or marital status
n. Retirement credit for unused sick leave
o. All compensation, including extra-duty pay, in computing retirement benefits
p. Benefits not reduced by other sources of income, including Social Security benefits
q. Preretirement counseling
r. Retirement housing facilities that are funded from sources other than those designated for retirement benefits
s. School employees' contributions and benefits that are not subject to federal income taxation
t. Nondiscriminatory Internal Revenue Service rules and regulations
u. An annual financial statement distributed to all members
v. Tax-sheltered annuity and deferred compensation plans with a broad choice of programs available to all members. These plans should have actuarial tables that do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, or national origin
w. Provisions to purchase pension credit for any previous Department of Defense teaching service
x. Fully paid comprehensive health insurance, including reimbursement for Medicare Part B premiums, for retired education employees, their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents
y. Benefits that are free from double taxation or source taxation by states for retiree's living outside of the state where the benefits were earned
z. All retirement benefits for spouses equally available for domestic partners
aa. Benefit formulas that provide full-year credit for each school year worked and provide that credit regardless of the number of hours worked per day. (69, 97)

F-51. Social Security

The National Education Association believes that Social Security should be available to eligible education employees where desired, but should not be mandated. Contracts with Social Security should provide for supplementary plans rather than integrated or coordinated plans.

The Association supports the reform of Social Security laws to eliminate discriminatory offset provisions and discrimination based on sex, marital status, or time of retirement and to reduce the retirement age. No benefit promised or no benefit for which money has been collected should be withdrawn without adequate replacement.

The Association also believes that Social Security retirement and survivor benefits should be based upon the Social Security program and Social Security taxes. Health and disability programs should be removed from the Social Security program and financed from general tax revenues. The Association supports the goal of comprehensive health insurance for retiree's. (77, 97)

F-52. Protection of Retirement System Assets and Earned Benefits

The National Education Association believes that retirement system assets can be invested in all types of investments. Equal consideration should be given to probable income and probable safety of the capital. All retirement benefits earned by school employees should under the law be payable to such school employees. Every effort should be made to maintain or improve existing retirement benefits. No person participating in a retirement system should be forced to accept any reduction in benefits below those in force at any time during the period of membership. The retirement benefits are earned and, therefore, inviolate.

The Association is aware of incursions on retirement system assets by state and municipal governments. Such incursions involve either a misuse of assets or the failure to appropriate required funds to the system. Both practices result in increasing accrued liabilities, which reduces the financial soundness of the system and jeopardizes the security of school employee retirement benefits. The Association believes that these incursions on retirement systems can best be prevented by the passage of federal and/or state legislation.

The Association also believes that a retirement system should be exempt from federal regulations when its plan is in compliance with minimal standards prescribed by federal, state, and local statutes. (76, 86)

F-53. Management of Education Employee Retirement Assets

The National Education Association believes that the boards of retirement systems of education employees should make every effort to participate in the decision-making process of corporations in which the systems hold stock by casting votes as stockholders that benefit the interests of the retirement systems and those of the united education profession and by electing to corporate boards members and/or representatives who support public education.

The Association further believes that the boards of retirement systems

should coordinate their voting in companies in which they have a mutual interest. (94)

G. SECURE PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY

G-1. State Professional Standards Boards

The National Education Association believes that the profession must govern itself. The Association also believes that each state should have a professional standards board, composed of a majority of practicing public school teachers.

Professional standards boards should have exclusive authority to license and to determine criteria for how a national certificate will be recognized for professional educators. Further, these boards should have the exclusive authority to establish the standards regarding licensure, including procedures for suspension and revocation. The Association opposes legislation that compromises the authority of state standards boards and urges the elimination of state statutes that conflict with this authority. The Association believes that these boards should apply National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards as a minimum for granting, denying, or withdrawing the approval of teacher preparation programs. (69, 95)

G-2. Certification

The National Education Association supports voluntary professional certification by which the profession grants recognition to an individual who has met qualifications specified by the profession. The Association recognizes that this function is filled by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) which is composed of a majority of practicing public school teachers.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards establishes appropriate assessment procedures by which individuals demonstrate exemplary practice in pedagogy and in subject matter areas, issues certificates to all individuals who meet NBPTS-established standards and maintains a roster of those who have been certificated.

The Association supports the periodic evaluation of such certification procedures to ascertain whether cultural, economic, gender, racial, or age bias is perpetuated by the requirements for certification. (87, 97)

G-3. Licensure

The National Education Association advocates rigorous state standards for entry into the teaching profession. These standards, as established by the professional standards boards, shall include high academic performance, field training experience that includes student teaching, and passage of appropriate pedagogical and subject matter tests. Tests should be valid and unbiased and should be included as one element of comprehensive assessment for completion of a teacher preparation program as well as for licensure into the profession.

The Association asserts that a teaching license should signify that an individual entering the teaching profession is competent to teach. A teaching license must be recognized as the primary requirement for employment in every public and private school (pre-K through 12). No license should be issued unless an individual possesses the entry-level knowledge and skills required for teaching. No temporary or emergency licenses should be issued. No assignments should be permitted outside the teacher's area of licensure without appropriate concurrent retraining supported by the local district.

The Association urges the elimination of state statutes/regulations that require teachers to renew their licenses. Where such renewal continues to be required, standardized literacy and basic skills tests to determine competency should not be used.

The Association supports regulations that would put professional educators, the majority of whom are licensed and practicing public school teachers, in state licensing agencies.

The Association supports the periodic evaluation of licensure procedures to ascertain whether cultural, economic, gender, racial, or age bias is perpetuated by the requirements for licensure. (85, 96)

G-4. Accreditation in Higher Education

The National Education Association supports strong regional, state, national, and discipline-based accrediting bodies that promote and encourage faculty participation in the accrediting process. The Association believes that programs, faculties, administrations, and facilities should be reviewed to determine their ability to enhance learning opportunities for students. The Association further believes that accrediting agencies should not impose standardized curricula, assessment models, or pedagogical methods on institutions of higher education but rather should base accreditation on standards as applied to the institutional mission. (95)

G-5. Accreditation of Teacher Preparation Institutions

The National Education Association believes that teacher education programs should be approved at two levels: at the state level through an agency such as a professional standards board and at the national level through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

The Association believes that NCATE and its governing boards must include representatives of all levels of the teaching profession as well as students preparing to teach. (69, 87)

H. UNITE EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYEES FOR EFFECTIVE CITIZENSHIP

H-1. The Education Employee as a Citizen

The National Education Association believes that every education employee has the right and obligation to be an informed and politically active citizen. The Association also believes that, as private citizens, education employees have the right to express their personal viewpoints in public without fear of censorship or intimidation. The Association supports voter education to alert voters to voting laws and procedures and key political issues. The Association supports written governing board policies to guarantee education employees their political rights. The Association further believes that local government units should be prevented from restricting the right of education employees to run for any elective office. Provisions should be made to enable education employees to serve in public office without curtailment of annual increments, tenure, retirement, or seniority rights, or to carry out jury duty without personal financial loss.

The Association believes that it is the duty and responsibility of education employees to involve themselves in the selection, election, and reelection of qualified, committed candidates who support goals that will provide quality education. Therefore, the Association urges its members to become politically involved and to support the political action committees of the Association and its affiliates. (69, 97)

H-2. The Right To Know

The National Education Association believes that open meeting and public disclosure laws are essential to permit the monitoring of governmental actions. (72, 97)

H-3. The Right To Vote

The National Education Association believes that the principle of one-person — one-vote must apply at all levels of government, including the election of the President of the United States.

The Association recognizes the right to vote as a constitutional right guaranteed to all eligible citizens. The Association further supports the continued maintenance of the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The Association supports simplified voting and absentee provisions for all elections, uniform registration requirements without restrictive residency provisions, and voter education programs. (71, 97)

H-4. U.S. Constitutional Convention

The National Education Association believes that the U.S. Constitution safeguards freedoms fundamental to our society. The Association also believes that all proposed changes to the Constitution should be directed through the traditional congressional proposal and state ratification process rather than through the convening of a constitutional convention, which opens the Constitution to the possibility of total revision. (82, 97)

H-5. Member Involvement in Community Organizations

The National Education Association encourages its members to become involved in citizen-based community organizations and to influence those organizations to address issues of common concern to their local, state, and national education associations. (92)

H-6. National Health Care Policy

The National Education Association believes that affordable, comprehensive health care is the right of every resident.

The Association supports the adoption of a single-payer health care plan for all residents of the United States, its territories, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

The Association will support health care reform measures that move the United States closer to this goal and that achieve universal and comprehensive health care coverage, control costs while assuring quality, emphasize prevention of health care problems, and are financed by means that assure greater equity in the funding of that health care.

The Association also believes that until a single-payer health care plan is adopted, Congress should make no cuts in Medicare/Medicaid benefit levels or in federal funding of the Medicare/ Medicaid program. (78, 97)

H-7. Energy Programs

The National Education Association believes that a national energy policy should reflect the efficient use of energy from all sources, provide research to develop new sources of energy, stress rapid development of

renewable energy sources, and promote conservation.

The Association supports ensuring the energy-efficient operation of public schools and encourages the use of new energy sources and energy-efficient design in school renovation and construction. The Association supports efforts that develop energy conservation awareness and school building energy audit programs. The Association also supports programs that investigate energy efficiency recommendations, research, and public health and safety programs for all educational levels in the schools. (77, 97)

H-8. Environmental Responsibility

The National Education Association believes that businesses and governmental agencies should be responsible for designing, producing, and using products that are reusable, recyclable, biodegradable, or disposable without contaminating the environment.

The Association encourages its affiliates and members to include these criteria in selection of products for use and to work with school systems and educational institutions in developing purchasing policies using these criteria.

The Association further believes that business and governmental agencies should dispose of waste in a manner that will have the least possible impact on the environment. (90, 95)

H-9. Historic Preservation

The National Education Association encourages the preservation of historically significant lands and structures for the purposes of preserving our nation's heritage and maintaining important historic resources for future generations. (90, 94)

H-10. Statehood for the District of Columbia

The National Education Association affirms that all citizens of the United States should enjoy the full benefits of citizenship. Accordingly, the Association supports efforts to achieve statehood for the District of Columbia.

The Association believes that the concept of fiscal autonomy is consistent with this position and that the federal payment to the District of Columbia should be based on an established formula. (69, 97)

I. PROMOTE AND PROTECT HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS

I-1. Peace and International Relations

The National Education Association recognizes the interdependence of all people. The Association believes in the ideals of peace, freedom, and human dignity based upon respect for individual and cultural diversity. The Association believes that peace is superior to war and, in this nuclear age, is basic to the survival of civilization.

The Association urges the nations of the world, through cooperative talks, to develop treaties and disarmament agreements that reduce the danger of nuclear and conventional wars so that resources may be used to improve the quality of life.

The Association supports the peaceful uses of outer space and opposes federal spending that would extend the arms race into outer space.

The Association recognizes that the United Nations (UN) can be an effective instrument for furthering world peace, supports the 1948 UN resolution relating to genocide, and promotes the rights of all people by exposing the horrors of war, racism, and genocide.

The Association supports the concept of a U.S. Institute of Peace. The Institute should be sufficiently funded to provide programs, training, and research data in developing peacemaking and conflict resolution skills as well as provide for the publication and dissemination of information in this field.

The Association further supports the development of peace and conflict resolution curricula in teacher preparation programs. (73, 96)

I-2. Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts

The National Education Association urges the nations of the world to develop, through cooperative talks, treaties that guarantee the rights of nations to coexist within safe and secure borders. The Association applauds those nations that have negotiated and continue to negotiate agreements with further guarantees of peace and cooperation.

The Association believes that the Education International should continue to facilitate the building of bridges of understanding and peace by initiating dialogue among education employees in areas of conflict. (85, 95)

I-3. International Court of Justice

The National Education Association believes in the concept of the rule of law throughout the world and recognizes that the International Court of Justice is one instrument to resolve international disputes peacefully.

The Association urges participation by the United States in deliberations before the court. (86, 97)

I-4. World Hunger

The National Education Association believes that worldwide attention needs to be focused on hunger and malnutrition. The Association supports continued relief to those in need as well as the education of children, youth, and adults concerning world hunger and its effects so that they may develop the capacity and the commitment to resolve these problems. (75, 89)

I-5. Covert Operations and Counterintelligence Activities

The National Education Association believes that U.S. covert operations and counterintelligence activities should be compatible with the basic principles of our democratic society.

The Association further believes that all such activities should be conducted under the jurisdiction of the executive and legislative branches of our government and that individuals must be held accountable when they work outside of the specific directives issued for a given operation. (89)

I-6. Nuclear Freeze/Cessation

The National Education Association believes that nuclear war, the common enemy of all nations and peoples, is not survivable. The proliferation of weapons technology and the sale and distribution of conventional and nuclear weapons increase the possibility of nuclear war.

The Association believes the United States and all other nations should adopt a verifiable freeze on the testing, development, production, upgrading, emplacement, sale, distribution, and deployment of nuclear weapons, materials, and all systems designed to deliver nuclear weapons. The Association supports the development of treaties for the cessation of all nuclear weapons testing, providing they contain adequate verification and enforcement provisions. The Association supports the development of treaties to eliminate the world's nuclear weapons arsenals. (82, 96)

I-7. Nuclear Facilities, Radioactive/Chemical Pollutants, and Waste Incineration

The National Education Association believes that strict monitoring of nuclear facilities and radioactive/chemical pollutants and waste incineration should be required. The Association urges the development and implementation of new technologies for the safe transport and recycling of all wastes. It further urges regulation of the U.S. Department of Energy by an independent agency to reduce the further radioactive pollution of our environment.

The Association supports programs that would educate the public to the dangers and benefits of nuclear power, recycling of nuclear wastes, problems of nuclear waste disposal, and health risks associated with waste incineration.

The Association believes that the people of a state should make the final determination as to whether or not toxic and/or nuclear waste processing sites or the transportation of nuclear waste shall be within their state boundaries. Contiguous states directly affected environmentally by processing sites should be included in the final determination. Strict guidelines concerning the construction and operation of waste incinerators should be required. The Association further believes that such facilities should not be constructed within a 10-mile radius of any school facility.

The Association further believes that education employees must be involved in the development and dissemination of emergency plans in the case of accidents that potentially could result in environmental or health hazards. (89, 97)

I-8. Global Environmental Restoration

The National Education Association believes that when pollution occurs the responsible entities must be accountable for an expeditious, complete cleanup and restoration of the environment and its ecological systems. (90, 93)

I-9. International Consumer Protection

The National Education Association believes that products sold and/or advertised abroad by U.S.-based companies must at least meet the consumer, health, and safety standards that are required for trade within the United States.

Furthermore, the Association opposes coercing other nations to accept U.S. products that do not meet those nations' consumer, health, and safety standards or practices. (90)

I-10. Human Rights

The National Education Association believes that the governments of all nations must respect and protect the basic human and civil rights of every individual, including equal access to education. The Association condemns any action that limits or prohibits the free and responsible exercise of these rights and believes that all education employees must lead in the effort to prevent any encroachment on basic human and civil rights. The Association also believes that the U.S. government should withhold all forms of military aid to governments that violate these rights.

The Association believes that violence is abhorrent. The Association

condemns violence, as well as the tolerance of violence, and believes that all nations must pass and enforce measures to curtail and prevent actions and practices that inflict pain, suffering, mutilation, or death; and offer asylum to those threatened by such actions.

The Association deplores the holding of hostages, all forms of torture, and the taking of human life in the name of making a political statement. The Association believes that it is the responsibility of all governments to discourage such actions by individuals or groups of individuals.

The Association calls upon all nations to release all education employees and students who are being held without charge and to refrain from the use of coercion and arbitrary detention to punish the people of a specific area of their territories. (77, 97)

I-11. Civil Rights

The National Education Association is committed to the achievement of a totally integrated society. The Association calls upon Americans to eliminate — by statute and practice — barriers of race, color, national origin, religion, philosophical beliefs, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, size, marital status, and economic status that prevent some individuals, adult or juvenile, from exercising rights enjoyed by others, including liberties decreed in common law, the Constitution, and statutes of the United States. Civil order and obedience to the law must be ensured without abridgment of human and civil rights. All individuals must be assured a speedy and fair judicial process with free legal counsel for those in need. To be effective citizens, individuals must be trained and aided in developing strategies and expertise that will enable them to operate effectively in a democratic society.

The Association opposes any amendment to the U.S. Constitution that curtails basic civil rights. (69, 95)

I-12. Human and Civil Rights of Children and Youth

The National Education Association believes that the human and civil rights of children and youth must be protected and opposes the exploitation of children and youth under any circumstances.

The Association condemns the use of children and youth by organizations, governments, and political/military movements to advance their political objectives. The Association condemns governments that subject young people to physical or mental abuse, violence, and unwarranted detention or incarceration. The Association opposes the impressment or acceptance of minors into the service of the armed forces of any government or into the service of revolutionary forces under any circumstances.

The Association further believes that children and youth in detention centers must be provided educational programs that will enable them to become contributing members of society. Teachers in such centers must be prepared to provide instruction in life skills and learning skills.

The Association opposes the imposition of the death penalty or life imprisonment without parole on individuals whose offenses were committed prior to age 18. The Association condemns the practice of placing children and youth in trouble in abusive environments. The Association further opposes the placement of children and youth who are not charged with any offense in facilities with persons who are charged with criminal offenses. The Association believes that there must be separate facilities for the detention and for the incarceration of children and youth and supports the development of alternatives to supplement the use of such facilities. (88, 97)

I-13. Family Planning

The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom.

The Association urges the government to give high priority to making available all methods of family planning to women and men unable to take advantage of private facilities.

The Association further urges the implementation of community-operated, school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel. (85, 86)

I-14. The Right To Organize

The National Education Association believes that all people have the right to organize in order to achieve an improvement of their living conditions through their own free and independent unions and organizations. The Association urges that this right be advocated where it is now abused or denied and strengthened where it is now secured.

The Association deplores anti-union activities by business interests, school districts, and government agencies, including efforts that attempt to destroy and undermine labor unions and organizations, penalize members for union involvement, and deprive workers of their right to organize and bargain. (82, 93)

I-15. Displaced Workers

The National Education Association believes that entities that close, move, sell, downsize, or reorganize their facilities have an obligation to provide displaced employees with a variety of retraining and support programs. These entities shall assist their employees with placement in jobs having comparable pay and benefits and shall maintain existing union contracts.

The Association opposes the use of public funds to encourage the movement of U.S. companies to other countries at the expense of U.S. union labor. (92, 93)

I-16. Use of Union-Made Products and Services

The National Education Association recognizes the historical role of organized labor in its struggle for economic and social justice. The Association advocates the use of union-made products and services. The Association supports the use of appropriately established boycotts and picket lines. (91, 94)

I-17. Migrant Workers

The National Education Association is concerned with the plight of migrant workers.

The Association supports the efforts of migrant workers to be represented in collective bargaining by the organization of their choice. (85)

I-18. Immigration

The National Education Association supports efforts to improve the immigration process, including the provision of due process, political asylum, and timely legalization without regard to national origin.

The Association opposes any immigration policy that denies human and/or civil rights or educational opportunities to immigrants and their children regardless of their immigration status. The Association condemns such policies as inhumane and discriminatory. The Association supports policies that protect the integrity of the family unit.

The Association believes that English and citizenship classes must be available in sufficient numbers to ensure that immigrating individuals can comply with all federal mandates for permanent residence and/or citizenship. (84, 95)

I-19. Housing and Health Care for All

The National Education Association believes that all members of our society have the right to adequate housing and health care. The Association supports programs to provide adequate housing and health care for the homeless and others in need of assistance. (89, 97)

I-20. Fair Housing

The National Education Association believes that all citizens should be free to reside in the communities of their choice. The Association supports the elimination of the discriminatory practice of redlining. (69, 97)

I-21. Invasion of Privacy

The National Education Association believes that every individual has a right to privacy. The Association continues to be concerned about the indiscriminate surveillance of citizens or groups by private and public agencies. The Association condemns the use of information gathered and stored and the exchange of such information without explicit release from the person or persons involved.

The Association recognizes that such rights to privacy and confidentiality must be guaranteed through federal and state legislation. The Association urges its affiliates to seek legislation that will guarantee these rights. (70, 86)

I-22. Freedom of Creative Expression

The National Education Association supports freedom of expression in the creative arts and therefore deplores any efforts by government to suppress, directly or indirectly, such expression. The Association further supports the freedom of publicly funded agencies to exercise judgment in the awarding of grants to individuals and organizations. (90)

I-23. Violence Against Women and Girls Worldwide

The National Education Association condemns domestic and other violence against women and girls, as well as the tolerance of such violence, and believes that all nations should pass and enforce measures to curtail and prevent actions, policies, and practices that inflict pain, suffering, or death. (93, 97)

I-24. Sexual Assault

The National Education Association supports efforts that will prevent and protect members of our society from becoming victims of sexual assault. The Association urges states to develop a systematic process for gathering evidence when such assault occurs and supports the use of DNA testing as a means to identify perpetrators of sexual assault. Further, the Association supports fair and equitable treatment by health, hospital, and law enforcement agencies for sexual assault victims. The Association believes that it is a violation of the victims' right to privacy to release the names of the victims or to have their past sexual history admitted as evidence in assault cases. The Association recognizes the importance of and

urges the rehabilitation of the assailant and the protection of due process rights for both the victim and the assailant. (81, 91)

I-25. Human Relations in the School

The National Education Association believes that improved human relations is essential to the school environment. To improve human relations in all schools, the Association calls for —

a. School recruitment and staffing policies that will ensure culturally diverse school employees
b. Appropriate classroom and other student-related activities, particularly those that are responsive to the cultural diversity and historical backgrounds of our society
c. Further development of continuing education programs to educate school and community personnel
d. Reduction of the ratio of students to licensed staff. This reduction should be to the level teachers determine to be essential to improved learning
e. Development of ways to improve community-police and student-police relations through the joint efforts of school, community, and law enforcement agencies
f. Joint discussions to promote understanding of human and civil rights and responsibilities in all segments of society
g. Development and implementation of curricula that teach students about positive human relations. (72, 94)

I-26. Martin Luther King Day

The National Education Association believes that Martin Luther King Day should be a state holiday in every state to focus on the importance of human relations. The Association encourages the observance of this day to promote good will among all people. (69, 97)

I-27. Freedom of Religion

The National Education Association believes that freedom of religion is a fundamental human right. The Association believes that choice of religion is an intensely personal decision. Instruction in religious doctrines and practices is best provided within a family setting and/or by religious institutions.

The Association believes that schools should teach the rights and responsibilities associated with the freedom of religion, the religious heritage and diversity of the United States, respect for the religion of others, and the historical and cultural influences of various world religions.

The Association believes that local school boards should adopt policies that govern religious activities on school property. Such policies must respect the separation of church and state; govern voluntary, student-led meetings with adult supervision before or after normal school hours; treat all religions on an equal basis; and protect the rights of students and education employees.

The Association opposes any federal legislation or mandate that would require school districts to schedule a moment of silence. The Association particularly opposes a moment of silence as a condition for receiving federal funds. (95)

I-28. Sectarian Practices in the School Program

The National Education Association believes that the constitutional provisions on the establishment of and the free exercise of religion in the First Amendment require that there be no sectarian practices in the public school program.

The Association opposes the imposition of sectarian practices in the public school program and urges its affiliates to do the same. (78, 86)

I-29. Gun-Free Schools and the Regulation of Deadly Weapons

The National Education Association believes that all students and educational employees must be allowed to learn and work in an environment free of unauthorized guns and other deadly weapons. Severe penalties should be enacted and strenuously enforced for criminal actions involving guns and other deadly weapons, especially in school settings, and for those who profit from the illegal sale, importation, and distribution of these weapons.

The Association also believes that strict prescriptive regulations are necessary for the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale and resale of handguns and ammunition magazines. The possession by the private sector of automatic weapons and military-style semiautomatic assault weapons should be illegal, except for historical and collection purposes which must be strictly regulated. A mandatory waiting period for a background check should occur prior to the sale of all firearms.

The Association further believes that gun owners should participate in educational programs that stress responsible ownership, including safe use and storage of guns. (82, 96)

I-30. Victims of a Crime

The National Education Association believes that victims of a crime should be treated with dignity and compassion, without the fear of intimidation. Victims and their families should be notified of and have the right to be present/represented at all hearings and legal proceedings involving the defendant/perpetrator.

The Association also believes that victims and their families must be made aware of and have free access to necessary services/programs. These services/programs must be funded by the appropriate government agencies. (87, 96)

I-31. Military Veterans

The National Education Association believes that many veterans of military conflicts are suffering physical, social, and psychological problems because of their involvement in combat and related military activities. The Association supports federal and state increases in benefits and programs, including retirement benefits, for these military veterans to meet their needs. (81, 97)

I-32. Traffic Safety

The National Education Association believes that traffic deaths and injuries must be reduced. The Association supports —

a. Enactment and enforcement of effective and equitable legislation regulating driving while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other mind-altering substances
b. Appropriate educational experiences for students regarding the effects of driving while under the influence
c. Recognized community and school groups in their efforts to reduce death and injury from accidents caused by drivers under the influence
d. Legislation requiring mandatory restraint of all passengers in motor vehicles, excluding school buses. The legislation should require the use of seat belts for adults and minor children and approved car seats for infants
e. Legislation requiring the use of helmets for bicycle and motorcycle riders
f. Continued research and the development of safety features and passive restraint systems for passengers in school buses and for the inclusion of those features shown to be effective. (82, 97)

I-33. Federal and State Support for Public Welfare

The National Education Association believes that conditions which cause reliance on public welfare must be alleviated. The Association also believes that the federal and state governments must work together to provide assistance in education, housing, child care, health care, transportation, and job training/placement. Furthermore, assistance must continue during the transition from welfare to work.

The Association also believes that no current employee should be displaced nor position abolished as a result of government efforts to move individuals from welfare to work. (71, 97)

I-34. Protection of Senior Citizens

The National Education Association condemns the physical, mental, and economic abuse of senior citizens.

The Association condemns those policies and practices that result in poor medical care; physical, mental, and economic abuse; excessive pharmaceutical charges; inadequate dietary programs; deteriorating living quarters; and untrained staff for patients and residents of nursing and retirement homes.

The Association supports legislation and consumer education to eliminate the use of unethical techniques, scare tactics, and misrepresentation to divest senior citizens of their financial resources.

The Association believes that its affiliates should join in political action to bring about legislative and administrative reform at the state and national levels. (78, 97)

I-35. People Living with HIV/AIDS

The National Education Association believes that people living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) should be ensured fair and equitable treatment allowing equal access to education, employment, living conditions, and all rights guaranteed by law. (94)

I-36. Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

The National Education Association believes that all buildings should be in compliance with the accessibility standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. (88, 97)

I-37. Protection of Persons with Mental Disabilities

The National Education Association believes that the human and civil rights of individuals with mental disabilities must be protected.

The Association also believes that individuals with mental disabilities who have committed criminal offenses should receive all diagnostic and/or psychological services that meet their needs and guarantee their right not to be abused while incarcerated. Further, the Association believes that

individuals with mental disabilities should not be subjected to capital punishment. (89, 97)

I-38. Care of the Mentally Ill

The National Education Association believes that it is society's responsibility to provide quality care for individuals suffering from debilitating mental illness.

Such persons should have access, as needed, to primary hospital care, outpatient services, necessary medication, social services, and housing in the least restrictive environment.

Financial assistance for such care should be based upon the ability of the individual to pay. (86)

I-39. Elimination of Racial, Ethnic, and Religious Discrimination

The National Education Association is committed to the elimination of racial, ethnic, religious, and all other forms of discrimination.

The Association condemns any code or system of discrimination and exploitation and believes that sanctions are both justified and necessary against governments, organizations, businesses, and/or groups that utilize or support discriminatory practices. (76, 97)

I-40. Institutional Discrimination

The National Education Association believes that organizations are strengthened by offering membership on a nondiscriminatory basis.

The Association shall not participate in programs sponsored by any organization and/or its auxiliary that deny membership to certain segments of our society on a discriminatory basis when such denials are not related to the stated purposes of the organization, nor shall the Association utilize the facilities of such organizations.

The Association urges its affiliates and members not presently holding membership in such organizations to discontinue any involvement with such organizations and urges that its members not participate in, provide programs to, or join organizations utilizing exclusionary membership.

The Association urges its members now holding membership in such organizations to work actively from within for the total elimination of such exclusionary clauses. (74, 86)

I-41. Use of Prejudicial Terms and Symbols

The National Education Association deplores prejudice based on race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, size, marital status, or economic status and rejects the use of names, symbols, caricatures, emblems, logos, and mascots that promote such prejudice. (92, 94)

I-42. Hate-Motivated Violence

The National Education Association deplores incidents of hate-motivated physical and verbal attacks against individuals or groups because of their race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, size, marital status, or economic condition. The Association further deplores materials that actively promote such incidents.

The Association urges its affiliates, in conjunction with community groups, to create an awareness of hate-motivated, violent activities and to develop programs to oppose them. The Association supports its affiliates in their efforts to bring about clear and consistent law enforcement to protect the civil and human rights of the victims of hate-motivated, violent actions. (91, 94)

I-43. Violence Against and Exploitation of Asians/Pacific Islanders

The National Education Association is committed to the elimination of racial and ethnic discrimination in all its forms. The Association deplores the resurgence of covert and overt anti-Asian/Pacific Islander sentiments, threats, and incidents of racially motivated physical and verbal attacks. The Association believes that community-based educational awareness programs should be developed in conjunction with Asian/Pacific Islander groups to create an awareness of this violence. The Association supports its affiliates in their efforts to bring about clear and consistent law enforcement to protect the civil and human rights of the victims of racial violence.

The Association deplores the exploitation of women by organizations that advertise mail-order brides in their catalogs. (84, 85)

I-44. Internment/Containment Policies

The National Education Association recognizes that restrictive and/or punitive action based on race or national origin is a violation of constitutional guarantees and is repugnant to the American ideals of life, liberty, and property.

The Association believes that the practice of internment/containment of racially identifiable segments of our newly immigrated and current populations must be stopped. (82, 93)

I-45. Reparation of Native American Remains

The National Education Association believes in the dignity of the dead and encourages laws to prevent the robbing of graves.

The Association believes that the remains of thousands of Native Americans in storage throughout the United States should be returned for interment to the tribes and/or areas from which they were taken. The Association further believes that American Indian sacred items in museum collections should be returned to the tribes of their origin. (89)

I-46. English as the Official Language

The National Education Association recognizes the importance of an individual's native language and culture and the need to promote and preserve them through instruction, public service announcements, and all other forms of communication.

The Association believes that, although English is the language of political and economic communication in the United States, efforts to legislate English as the official language disregard cultural pluralism; deprive those in need of education, social services, and employment; and must be challenged. (87, 93)

I-47. Inclusive Medical Studies

The National Education Association believes that women and members of racial minority groups must be included in the samples of all medical studies, surveys, and research purporting to yield results applicable to all segments of a population. (91)

I-48. Sexual Harassment

The National Education Association recognizes that sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination or abuse.

The Association believes that classroom teachers, faculty, staff, and students should be protected from sexual harassment. The Association encourages its affiliates to work with local school districts and institutions of higher education to —

a. Establish strong policies defining and prohibiting sexual harassment
b. Develop educational programs designed to help people recognize, understand, prevent, combat, and eliminate sexual harassment
c. Develop and publicize a grievance procedure that encourages the reporting of incidents of sexual harassment, resolves complaints promptly, and protects the rights of all parties. (88, 94)

I-49. Equal Opportunity for Women

The National Education Association believes that all persons, regardless of gender, must have equal opportunity for employment, promotion, compensation (including equal pay for comparable worth), and leadership in all activities.

The Association supports an amendment to the U.S. Constitution (such as the Equal Rights Amendment), which guarantees that equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state because of gender. The Association urges its affiliates to support ratification of such an amendment. The Association also supports the enactment and full funding of the Women's Educational Equity Act.

The Association also believes that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission must have cease-and-desist authority to act in all cases of discrimination based on race, creed, color, age, national origin, sexual orientation, and gender.

The Association also believes that governing boards and education associations must eliminate discriminatory practices against women in employment, promotion, and compensation. Personnel policies must include family leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, leave for adoption of a child, child-care leave, and professional leave which encourages women to participate in professional growth experiences and to prepare for administrative and executive positions.

The Association also believes that national, state, and local agencies should consider research specifically related to women and their health problems and concerns.

The Association also believes that professional associations at all levels should adopt policies that ensure women equal access to elective, appointive, and staff positions.

The Association further believes in the establishment of women's education committees in local and state associations as a vehicle for implementation of equal opportunity for women.

The Association believes that sexism and sex discrimination must be eliminated and endorses the use of nonsexist language. (69, 97)

I-50. Personal Relationships in Higher Education

The National Education Association recognizes that in institutions of higher education adult students and educators may establish personal relationships. However, such relationships should be voluntary and not be used to coerce or influence others for personal advantage. Thus, the Association believes that sexual relationships between a faculty member and a student currently enrolled in the faculty member's course, or under the supervision or direction of any higher education employee, are unprofessional. The Association urges its affiliates in institutions of higher education to establish strong policies declaring such relationships unprofessional. (89, 94)

I-51. Minority-Owned Businesses

The National Education Association believes that minority-owned businesses should be encouraged. The Association urges the federal government to initiate and continue policies that encourage minority-owned businesses. (89)

I-52. Integration in the Public Schools

The National Education Association believes that it is imperative that full integration of the nation's schools be effected.

The Association recognizes that acceptable integration plans will include affirmative action programs and a variety of devices, such as geographic realignment, pairing of schools, grade pairing, and satellite and magnet schools. Some arrangements may require busing of students in order to comply with established guidelines adhering to the letter and spirit of the law.

The Association urges its affiliates to encourage school boards to study and consider seriously the negative impact on minority students when schools located in minority neighborhoods are targeted for closing.

The Association will assist its affiliates to assure that education employees, parents, and students are involved in the development of plans designed to achieve integration. The Association urges state and federal agencies to provide funds necessary to implement integration programs, including funds for student transportation. The Association also urges participation in citizen advisory committees — consisting of members designated by the local education association, parents, and representatives of community organizations, business, clergy, and media — that reflect the ethnic makeup of the community in developing, implementing, and evaluating student desegregation plans.

The Association believes that integrated schools must provide students with equal access to all curricular and extracurricular programs and to technological equipment and knowledge.

The Association opposes any attempts to delay or impede implementation of desegregation orders and will, therefore, resist efforts of school boards to resegregate integrated schools.

The Association will continue to oppose vigorously the systematic displacement or demotion of minority, especially Black, teachers and administrators to achieve integration. The Association also opposes actions of boards of education to finance integration plans through reduction of school staff. In addition, the Association will oppose the capricious reassignment and displacement of Hispanic teachers and administrators because of desegregation and bilingual programs. (69, 93)

I-53. Ethnic-Minority Educators

The National Education Association believes that multiracial teaching staffs are essential to the operation of schools. The Association deplores the current trend of diminishing numbers of ethnic-minority educators.

The Association urges local and state affiliates and appropriate governing bodies and agencies to work to increase the number of ethnic-minority teachers and administrators to a percentage at least equal to, but not limited to, the percentage of the ethnic minority in the general population. The Association further urges U.S. Department of Defense schools actively to recruit and hire ethnic-minority educators. (79, 89)

J. OBTAIN FOR ITS MEMBERS THE BENEFITS OF AN INDEPENDENT, UNITED EDUCATION PROFESSION

J-1. Strong Professional Associations

The National Education Association believes that an independent and professional organization is vital to its members and affiliates. This independence must be safeguarded in any alignments with other organizations.

The Association further believes that the unity of effort of a professional organization promotes the interests of its members and advances a strong, healthy learning environment. (74, 94)

J-2. Supporting Locals in Jeopardy

The National Education Association believes that assistance should be afforded to those affiliates that exist within concentrated territories of competing organizations. The Association encourages its affiliates to initiate and support programs that will strengthen and enhance the local organizational structure and promote membership growth within the Association. Continuous communications and cooperation of local, state, and national bodies are keys to the success of the local affiliates in building solid professional organizations.

The Association believes that assistance should be given to those local associations that have been —

a. Targeted for take-over efforts
b. Taken over by competing organizations
c. The object of "association busting."

Members of affiliated locals that are not the bargaining agent must be provided an effective means of processing grievances. (76, 96)

J-3. Membership Participation in the Association

The National Education Association believes that every member has the right and obligation to participate fully in the Association. The opportunity to participate in the Association must be afforded every member without fear, intimidation, or retribution.

The Association also believes that school policies should provide released time without loss of pay to those who are fulfilling leadership responsibilities, attending meetings, or participating in other Association activities. (69, 94)

J-4. Minority Participation in the Association

The National Education Association believes that at every phase of governance and on all decision-making levels of the Association there should be minority participation at least proportionate to the identified ethnic-minority population of that geographic level.

Ethnic minorities should be included as candidates for positions at all levels. The Association should promote minority participation in program development and should employ minorities and women in staff positions consistent with Association affirmative action policies.

The Association also believes that its affiliates should maintain a commitment to organizational policies and programs that promote the training and involvement of minorities at all levels of the organization.

The Association believes that there is a need for systematic evaluation of minority participation at all levels. (72, 96)

J-5. Student Member Participation

The National Education Association believes that eligible students should have the opportunity to join the Association. The Association further believes that students should be encouraged to participate in the Association at the local, state, and national levels. Preprofessional and leadership training should be priorities.

Further, the Association believes that local advisers should be members of the Association. (91, 94)

J-6. Retired Member Participation

The National Education Association believes that its retired members should have the opportunity to participate in the Association at the local, state, and national levels.

The Association further believes that retired members are a valuable asset in furthering the goals of the Association in areas including — but not limited to — political action, legislative lobbying, member training, crisis assistance, and other programs in which their years of experience have lead to their cumulative expertise. (76, 97)

J-7. Promotion of Teaching as a Career Choice

The National Education Association supports the establishment of organizations involving students interested in the field of education as a profession. The Association believes that its state affiliates should promote the establishment of such organizations at all age levels and encourage its members to serve as advisers. (80, 96)

J-8. Universal Education Employee Rights

The National Education Association supports the efforts of all associations of education employees in the world to secure basic rights for their members. The Association commends those education employees and students around the world who champion academic freedom and campaign against illiteracy, especially when their activities must be conducted under oppressive and often life-threatening conditions.

The Association stands ready to help all associations of education employees obtain their basic rights as listed in the NEA resolutions.

The Association condemns all governments for their roles in any acts of injustice against education employees and their organizations and, thus, the children and youth of those countries. The Association urges the U.S. government to refrain from supporting any governments that suppress academic freedom and literacy.

The Association urges the U.S. government to refrain from any plan for overt or covert action that would destabilize or overthrow any government or would adversely affect a government's successful campaign to improve literacy, equal education support, health care, and living and working conditions. (81, 95)

J-9. Organizations of Other Nations

The National Education Association believes that a strong international community of educators is necessary to promote international understanding and to defend the interests of education employees in all countries. The Association actively supports the Education International and will continue to cooperate with professional education organizations of other nations. (69, 95)

From the

The NEA Informat Network the follo helpful resource

AIDS in the Wo
The First National Bu Labor Conference or sponsored by the Ce Disease Control and will provide a state-c cational forum on AI workplace on Septer Washington, D.C. Fo mation and to regist 800/458-5231 or ch www.brta-ltra.org.

Breast Cancer
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More Ways To S
The National Institute Abuse (NIDA) has pu *venting Drug Use An and Adolescents: A F Based Guide*. Laid ou and-answer form, the at what attracts youn drugs and spells out effective methods of drug abuse. For free the National Clearingl Alcohol and Drug Inf 800/729-6686. For m tion on this subject, v the Web at www.nida

Radon Testing
Every home and scho tested for radon. For on radon and how to cost test kits, contact the Radon Information Center at 703/356-5346 or Fax 703/356-5386.

Updated Response
An updated version of *Responding to HIV and AIDS*, now available from the NEA Health Information Network, provides background on HIV/AIDS and guidelines for school situations. For free copies, in English or Spanish, contact NEA HIN at 800/718-8387.

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Resources

■ Teaching heart-healthy habits to children—that's the goal of a new initiative from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health. One program called CATCH—the Child and Adolescent Trial for Cardiovascular Health—provides student- and teacher-tested materials targeted to grades 3-5. Materials involving physical education, the classroom, the home, and the school cafeteria are combined as part of the largest school-based health promotion study ever. For more information and a CATCH order form, contact NHLBI Information Center, P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-1050; Fax 301/251-1223; E-mail nhlbiic@dgsys.com.

■ *Fitting Fitness In, Even When You're Pressed for Time*, the first booklet in a series produced by Shape Up America!, provides practical tips on how to fit exercise into an already crammed schedule. Included are useful illustrations of stretches and strength-building exercises that can be done even by the busy educator. To obtain a copy, specify the brochure's name and send $1 to Shape Up America!, P.O. Box 9738, Bridgeport, CT 06699.

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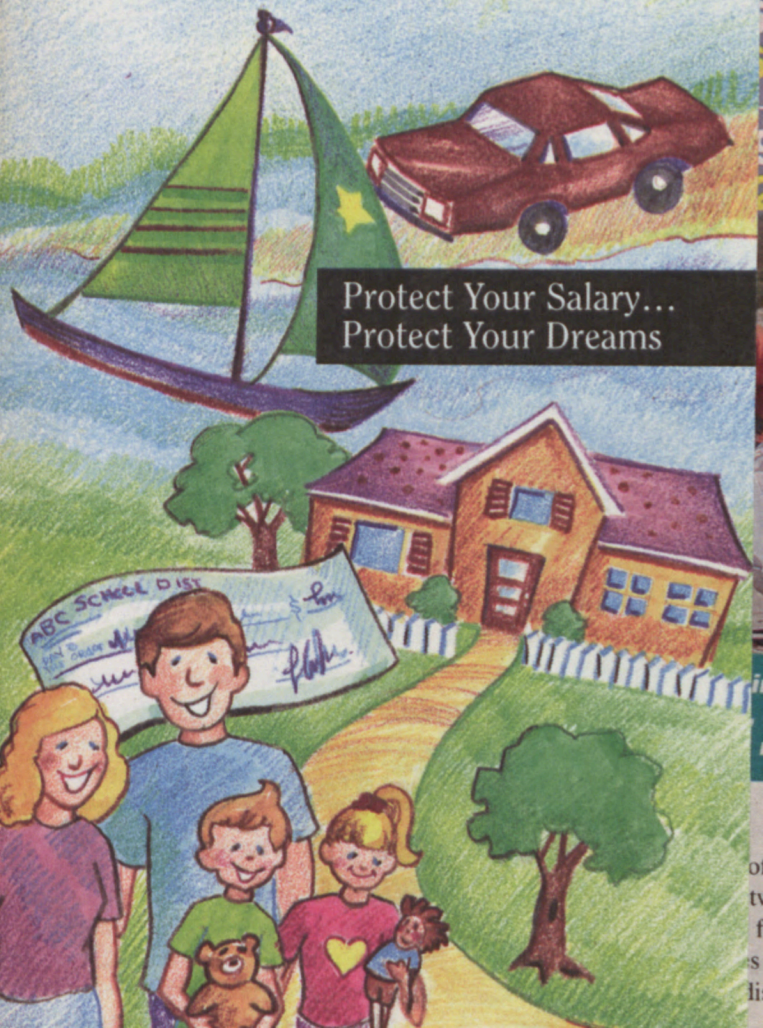

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[1] *Money Magazine,* April 1996.
[2] *Your Money,* October/November 1994.
[3] *Self Magazine,* June 1995.
[4] National Safety Council, *Accident Facts,* 1996 ed.

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